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VOLUME XIX

HELENE BÖHLAU

CLARA VIEBIG

EDUARD VON KEYSERLING

THOMAS MANN

LUDWIG THOMA

RUDOLF HANS BARTSCH

EMIL STRAUSS

HERMANN HESSE

ERNST ZAHN

JAKOB SCHAFFNER

THE GERMAN CLASSICS

Masterpieces of German Literature

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

AUTUMN

Patrons' Edition

IN TWENTY VOLUMES

From the Painting by Karl Ilnder

NEW YORK

THE GERMAN CLASSICS

Masterpieces of German Literature

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IN TWENTY VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

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NEW YORK

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CONTRIBUTORS AND TRANSLATORS

VOLUME XIX

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The Contemporary Short Story.

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The Ball of Crystal; In the Old "Sun."

MRS. AMELIA VON ENDE:
The Iron Idol.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME XIX

PAGE

The Contemporary Short Story. By Julius Petersen xi

HELENE BÖHLAU

The Ball of Crystal. Translated by A. I. du P. Coleman 1

CLARA VIEBIG

Burning Love. Translated by William Guild Howard 77

EDUARD VON KEYSERLING

Gay Hearts. Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan 101

THOMAS MANN

Tonio Kröger. Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan 184

LUDWIG THOMA

Matt the Holy. Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan 251

RUDOLF HANS BARTSCH

The Styrian Wine-Carter. Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan 268

EMIL STRAUSS

Mara. Translated by William Guild Howard 285

HERMANN HESSE

In the Old "Sun." Translated by A. I. du P. Coleman 325

ERNST ZAHN

Stephen the Smith. Translated by Katharine Royce 373

JAKOB SCHAFFNER

The Iron Idol. Translated by Mrs. Amelia von Ende 456

ILLUSTRATIONS — VOLUME XIX

PAGE

Autumn. By Karl Haider ..... *Frontispiece*
Helene Böhlau 2
Wife of a Clamdigger. By Hans von Bartels 32
Folksong. By K. Reutlingen 52
Clara Viebig 78
A Portrait. By Adolf Münzer 102
The Gossips. By Friedrich Wahle 142
Little Curiosity. By Julius Exter 172
Thomas Mann 186
Arco. By Benno Becker 226
Ludwig Thoma 252
Rudolf Hans Bartsch 270
Back from the Fair. By Franz Wilhelm Voigt 286
Hermann Hesse 326
A Human Load. By Franz Wilhelm Voigt 336
Flower Market at Leyden. By Hans Herrmann 356
Ernst Zahn 374
Evening. By Ludwig Dill 400
Moonrise in the Moor. By Otto Modersohn 420
Forest Meadows. By Oscar Frenzel 450
Moorland. By Otto Modersohn 480

THE CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORY

By Julius Petersen, Ph.D.

Professor of German Literature, University of Basel

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM GUILD HOWARD

THE last two volumes of this comprehensive publication are devoted to the living, the writers of the present who sow the seed from which shall grow the future of German letters. But who can speak of prophecy or prevision, at a moment when all who call themselves German are compelled to fight for their existence, and the future of German nationality as well as of German culture is hidden by the smoke of battle? To the four quarters of the globe the wild alarm *Germania est delenda* is trumpeted as a so-called duty of human civilization; isolated Germany can respond only with her resolute *Victory or Death.* What shall be the end? Shall this war of the nations, unparalleled in history, mean for Germany the destruction of all her material and spiritual possessions, as they were destroyed during the thirty years of horror in the seventeenth century? Or has Germany, thrown upon her own resources, attained to full consciousness of her strength, and now at last repaired the damage of that national calamity, which devastated her territory, subjected her to foreign domination, and continued to retard her progress for two full centuries?

Who can foretell whether the heroism of a mighty time, whose dawn we see, is to give new inspiration to patriotic poetry for centuries to come, and beget a new generation of bards worthy to sing of arms and men? The spirit of self-sacrificing devotion which waged the Seven Years' War and the Wars of Liberation has returned to animate the Germany of today. Who knows, however, but that

many a precious life will be sacrificed from which we hoped for great things even in our literature, and which now sheds its blood in a struggle for the warrior's laurel wreath? For German poets have also heard the call to arms; and those who have not, like Ganghofer, despite his sixty years, and Dehmel with his fifty-one, joined the ranks of the volunteers, tune their lyres to Tyrtæan measures and enlist their pens in the service of their native land. Thus Gerhart Hauptmann, who only a year ago concluded his dramatic celebration of the centennial of German liberation with an apotheosis of peace, now comes forward with stirring war songs.

Is this still the people to which Goethe belonged? At a time when a common cause with Austria conjures up again the shade of the dear old Holy Roman Empire no other verse in *Faust* seems so inept as that concerning the ugly political song. Today we should rather say "An unpolitical song, an ugly song;" for to the people that but a few weeks ago was mindful of naught but works of peace everything has become a matter of indifference except the burning question of the hour. Even though the longed-for peace should soon return, the year 1914 must leave a deep mark in the development of German literature. As yet we can only look back, not forward, from this milestone; and even in so doing we cannot escape from the present.

One thing the very first days of the war have made manifest: the physical and moral strength and the healthy marrow of the German people. Our literature, as the most faithful mirror of national life, has reflected in the past ten years this incorruptible healthfulness, and if we look somewhat farther back, we even see something resembling a process of convalescence. It was possible in 1903 for a novel *Jena or Sedan* by Franz Adam Beyerlein to create a sensation. Written in the manner of Zola, the book, which, because of an alleged dry rot in the German army, prophesied mischance in the future, produced its effect not so much through an apparently objective but gloomy

depiction of life in the garrisons, as through the nourishment that it gave to the torturing doubts which during the last decades of the nineteenth century grew rank as a fatalistic pessimism. The very principle of naturalism as a form of art, with its one-sided preference for disease, crime, and weakness, flourished on the offal of a materialistic philosophy of life, which viewed the vanity of existence with weary resignation. But this disease of the times was as little a specifically German malady as the naturalism imported from France and Russia was a genuine form of German art. Liberation from paralyzing lethargy was possible only through a realization of the fact that the real sources of national power were to be sought elsewhere. The soul of the German people, which in former centuries gave birth to mysticism and romanticism, is filled with a yearning for the infinite that cannot in the long run be contented with a materialistic philosophy; and the home of the German people, broad and fertile Germany, presents other pictures than a view of coal mines and swarming streets seen through the narrow space between factory chimneys. As a reaction against naturalism there arose therefore a neo-romanticism, and as its national modification, an art of the native heath (*Heimatkunst*).

There is no contradiction between romanticism and *Heimatkunst;* for it was romanticism that in its time aroused the Germans to a real sense of what their native heath meant for them; neither is *Heimatkunst* opposed to naturalism. In both *Heimatkunst* and naturalism nature is the watchword, but with the difference that what for the one is the principle is for the other the subject of poetic representation. Naturalism aimed to give the impression of inexorable fidelity to nature in the reproduction of the unhealthful and of that which strictly speaking was contrary to nature; *Heimatkunst,* on the other hand, had recourse to free and open nature as the unfailing fountain of health. When naturalism came to the fore it was customary to designate the opposing tendencies as idealism

and realism; the contrast is better expressed by the terms optimism and pessimism. In the last ten years clear prevision of the tasks of the future and a sense of the duty of national training for these tasks, such as we admire in the Americans, has developed in Germany. A hopeful outlook fosters the joy of living; as this joy increases, a new love of nature and a new comprehension of her revelations develop; the old German passion for roving revives; and delight in song and sport, in fresh air and sunshine, rejuvenates the whole people. Literature follows this national bent and its rallying cry becomes "Out of the atmosphere of the hospital and oppressive wretchedness, back to the life-giving sod which yields sustenance to every worker, out into the country, where there is a sufficiency for simple wants, where there is no strife between capital and labor, where the harshness of social distinctions vanishes and the feeling prevails of a common bond between man and his native heath as well as between man and man."

The optimistic faith in the future of the German people furnishes the foundation also for the consciousness of a great unity to which all branches of the German stock have now awakened, and which is the second important element in the present state of things. German history testifies to more than a thousand years of inner and outer disunion. The present war is almost the first in which Germans have not to array themselves against Germans; this time there is left only the common pain and the common bitterness that a people of kindred blood takes the field against Germany. But all the German tribes and nations feel themselves to be one people — indeed, the sense of membership proclaims itself in the form of sympathy beyond political boundaries "as far as the German tongue is heard." However little political influence may be attached to this fact, its cultural significance is not to be underestimated; for a common language forms today a stronger bond than the sense of racial consanguinity, and this bond is most of all strengthened by the common possession of a literature.

It has been hardly more than a hundred years that the Germans could be said to possess a national literature. Even the literature of the eighteenth century was ill-starred by the partisan strife between the Saxons and the Swiss, a strife which had its origin more particularly in irreconcilable differences of language. Permanent peace was concluded at Weimar without any feeling that the supremacy of this spiritual centre was tyranny. Even in his old age Goethe showed the keenest interest in all local and dialectical literature, and romanticism reinforced the sense for every ancient trait of national individuality. United Germany has no need of an academy to fix the canons of usage; on the contrary, it recognizes in the variety of local and dialectical peculiarities a source of wealth which would be impaired by any normalization, and the drying up of which would threaten literature with sterility. Cultivated Germany is not an anarchy, but a federation of many small states, with a much more democratic constitution than such a unified state as France, of which state Paris is the monarch. The influence of Prussia, mostly misunderstood abroad, is confined to military and civil administration; in questions of art and culture, but above all in literature, every attempt to enforce uniformity meets with the most stubborn resistance.

The turn of the century witnessed, it is true, an ominous assumption of authority on the part of the imperial capital in the domain of literature, and especially the drama; but it was not so much Berlin as the great city as such. The diseases of superculture, impotent estheticism, the restless spirit of commercialism, and social conflicts are of the same kind in Berlin and Vienna as in Paris, London, and New York. Naturalism, which seized upon these themes, was international, as was socialism, which hailed this movement as its own. With the opposition against naturalism and with the new gospel of *Heimatkunst* the revolt against the international, against the literature of city life in general, and particularly against the snobbish literary clique in

Berlin was complete. As early as 1901 the gospel of "Away from Berlin!" was thus fervently preached by a champion of *Heimatkunst*, the Alsatian Fritz Lienhard:

> You writers are all of you entirely out of touch with the German family, with the spirit of the German people throughout the length and breadth of the empire. You no longer survey with comprehensive vision and open-mindedness the manifold regions of our country and the multifarious callings of our people; you no longer feel yourselves to be addressing the millions of good people whose mother tongue you speak, indeed, the best people of your day and generation; you do not dream of disciplining yourselves to be men and heroes, or of striving to be at one with the widely ramified nation and the still more widespread spirit of humanity. Aimlessly yielding to your artistic whims, crotchets, and triflings, you make "interesting works of art" out of your own immaturity, you are satisfied with an audience composed of an infinitesimal fraction of our people, a fraction, moreover, which, things being as they are, consists chiefly of the *parvenus* residing in Berlin W. This is the public which — more is the pity — dominates the picture galleries, the concert halls, and the theatres of Berlin, and from Berlin affects to set the standard of taste for the empire so far, it must be added, as the empire at large concerns itself at all with this meticulous literature. Religion is a private matter, declares Social Democracy. We might plaintively add that literature is a parlor matter, the special affair of Berlin. . . . Our literature does not throb with the heart-beats of the national soul. And he who seriously, patriotically, out of the abundance of his heart and the richness of his mind, and out of a lively sense of community with the myriads of German-speaking men and women seeks entrance into the world of letters, he faces in painful amazement the dilemma: People or literature? Human being or artist? Personality or artifice?

These utterances might be taken as a reckless abandonment of artistry in favor of the national, but commonplace; and in fact, *Heimatkunst*, when assimilated to folklore, as it was in this gospel, did run the risk of an uninspired monotony. Such writers as Sohnrey and Frenssen have not altogether escaped the danger. Only the synthesis of form and content, only creation conscious of racial peculiarity but obedient to severe esthetic discipline, can keep in the path of fruitful progress. The intimate connection of man with his native soil presents a modern artistic

problem which can be solved neither by the experimental method, according to which naturalism investigated the *milieu* as a causal factor, nor by the amateurishly descriptive processes of idyllic poetasters and local favorites, but must be intuitively grasped by the penetrating eye of a real seer.

Not merely the subject, but also the seer is native to the spot. The true poet will always be found to know most intimately the land of his birth and the men of his race. If he confined himself to these, he would be a narrow specialist. If, on the other hand, he represents other characters in less familiar setting, he will still envisage them in the manner to which he is born, and in language, style, and all the forms of apperception he will reveal the temperament and the nature of his stock. As the specifically German novel, taken by and large, is distinguished by national traits from the Russian, French, or American, even when it has been modified by influences from many sides, so the novel of each separate German tribe and nation has kept its peculiarity within the range of the general membership, one with another. The whole constitutes an orchestra of manifold instruments, each with its own *timbre*, and yet all in tune and harmony, and no one superfluous. The detection of the individual instruments is possible, if we attentively analyze. The present centrifugal tendency of German literature has strongly developed such a sense for the detection of differences. Recently the attempt has been made to group the entire history of German literature from the most ancient times according to racial stocks and regions, an experiment that would scarcely have been made if the literary circumstances of the present had not especially invited it.

Literature in Low German has had from time immemorial its sharply defined character, which harmonizes with the North German landscape. Broad expanses of dead-level heath, great gray-brown moorlands, meadows intersected by glittering canals, a boundless horizon which gives

the eye a sense of freedom and independence, the blue atmosphere of the sea which contributes something metaphysical to the humdrum of existence — on this soil a grave race flourishes, of quick conscience and serious life. The old saying *Frisia non cantat* marks the lack of exuberance and of the spirit of revelry. But shy reticence finds compensation in good-natured humor. Unenthusiastic but substantial realism, speculative meditation, and a certain didactic tone make the Low German country the home of the fable and the great epic. That such a great dramatist as Hebbel was also a scion of this stock seems almost exceptional. The stubborn peasant family-stocks, the urban culture of the Hanseatic cities, and the scattered seats of the nobility, even as far east as the Russian Baltic provinces, bear witness to the development of a uniform temperament in spite of all the differences of social environment. We can, then, on the basis of common Low German characteristics form a great group of writers: writers from the Baltic provinces, the upper-class life of which has been treated by Eduard von Keyserling, while need and struggle have been described by Frances Külpe and Karl Worms; the West Prussians, represented by Max Halbe; the Pomeranians (Georg Engel), the Mecklenburgers (Max Dreyer), the Hanseatics (Gustav Falke, Thomas Mann, Otto Ernst), the Schleswig-Holsteiners (Timm Kröger, Charlotte Niese, Gustav Frenssen, Othmar Enking, Helene Voigt-Diederichs), the Hanoverians (Diedrich Speckmann, Heinrich Sohnrey, Karl Söhle), the Westphalians (Hermann Wette, Walther Schulte vom Brühl).

Along the banks of the Rhine, on the other hand, there dwells in the same latitude a more vivacious people, whose mischievous cheerfulness and easy-going philosophy of life are manifestations of their Frankish blood. It is striking that hardly one of the most prominent Rhenish writers of the present (Clara Viebig, Joseph Lauff, Rudolf Herzog, Wilhelm Schäfer, Wilhelm Schmidtbonn, Herbert Eulenberg) has failed to try his hand at the drama. In Middle Germany emotions are more deep-seated and more respon-

sive; people are more sentimental, more soft-hearted, more talkative, more visionary, have a finer sense of form, but a more conventional manner of speech. In this charming region of forests and mountains, to which the population is warmly attached and in which it finds protection, there is abundant occupation for a tender heart and a lively imagination. Middle Germany is the home of mysticism and romanticism, and this fact is apparent in the authors of the present day: the Silesians (Karl and Gerhart Hauptmann, Hermann Stehr, Paul Keller), the Misnians (Max Geissler, Kurt Martens), the Thuringians (Helene Böhlau, Marthe Renate Fischer, Wilhelm Arminius), the Hessians (Wilhelm Speck), the Franconians (Wilhelm Weigand, Bernhard Kellerman), and the inhabitants of the Palatinate (Anna Croissant-Rust).

Fondness for music is especially prominent in the stocks in which there has been an infusion of Slavic elements. In Upper Germany, accordingly, a sharp line is to be drawn between the Bavaro-Austrian and the Alemannic group. In Austria the capacity for sensuous enjoyment and a certain indolence are combined with a tendency toward sanguine but short-lived enthusiasms. A soft, southern air blows about the heights of Styria as well as over Vienna and its environs, and in the works of the writers of these regions (Wilhelm Fischer-Graz, Rudolf Hans Bartsch) everything is resolved into a lyrical mood and a melody of words. Similarly in the case of writers of southern Tirol (Hans von Hoffensthal, Richard Huldschiner), whereas on the northern slope of the Alps a race of men made of sterner stuff is reared (Rudolf Greinz, Karl Schönherr). In Bavaria, finally, people are even more rough and ready and lyrical sentimentality yields to a pugnacious propensity to ridicule, which gives satirical seasoning to the works of the genuinely Bavarian writers Ludwig Thoma and Joseph Ruederer.

The sluggish Alemannians, on the contrary, lack the vivacity of the Bavaro-Austrian stock. On the monotonous heights of the Swabian plateau are developed such brusque

individualism, tenacious self-will, peculiar humor inclined to self-depreciation, soaring fantasy, and (withal there is no lack of comprehension for the ideas of domesticity) such a predilection for adventures abroad as we find in the Swabian narrators Emil Strauss, Hermann Hesse, Ludwig Finckh, and Heinrich Lilienfein. Didacticism, present in all Alemannic prose and poetry, finds more popular forms among the story-writers of the Black Forest of Baden (Heinrich Hansjakob, Hermine Villinger, Emil Gött, Hermann Burte), while in the local character of the Alsatians, the source of Hermann Stegemann's novels, good-natured practical joking is more at home. As the rough Alpine country demands the utmost of human industry, so in the realm of art it has developed a sympathy with practical, efficient life, which, disinclined to all speculation (for Spitteler stands well-nigh alone in this matter), is rather under the sway of pedagogical interests. In Switzerland literature is most indissolubly bound up with the life of the whole people, and a gay art for art's sake cannot thrive. Here are to be found true farmer-authors, such as Alfred Huggenberger, who still guides the plow across his fields, or poets who have risen from the ranks of handicraftsmen, such as Jakob Schaffner, or those who prosecute their literary avocation side by side with the business of a restaurateur, like Ernst Zahn. And no other of the compatriots of Pestalozzi (J. C. Heer, Heinrich Federer, Meinrad Lienert, Felix Möschlin) disdains either, to be in the truest sense a popular poet and an educator of the people.

By virtue of the inexhaustible riches which the *Heimatkunst* brought to light, the defiant rejection of the literature of the great cities has been rightly recognized as no mere theoretical programme. The novel of urban life, such as flourished in Berlin, Vienna, and Munich at the close of the last century, is today antiquated and has lost its savor. And it is significant that the Berlin novel of the last few years, for example Georg Hermann's *Jettchen Gebert* (1906) or the two most recent works of Clara Viebig,

prefers for its scene of action the Berlin of the seventies, which, as yet free from the modern German "South Sea Bubble," preserved for the inordinately growing city its old established local character.

An account of German narrative writing of the present time is a kind of ethnography of the German stocks and regions. The names above-mentioned, selected without prejudice and also without arbitrariness, ought to be represented here each with a specimen. In part, these authors have been represented in the preceding volumes. The necessary limits of this volume permit consideration of only a dozen. The varieties of language and style which distinguish them one from another cannot fail to be somewhat obscured in a translation; nevertheless, the six pairs which we have arrayed according to racial affiliation and age are well adapted to give an impression of the manifoldness of German narrative prose at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In the first place we mention two women, Helene Böhlau and Clara Viebig. Both have passed through the naturalistic school—for the former, indeed, naturalism marked only a period of transition; for the latter it meant conversion to a creed to which she has remained faithful.

The cradle of Helene Böhlau stood on classic ground. Exactly one hundred years after Schiller, in November, 1859, she was born in Weimar, the daughter of a publisher whose name has become known chiefly in connection with the great Weimar edition of Goethe's complete works. Her grandmother, "Grammie" as the children called the old lady, took to her heart the shy and timid girl and revealed to her from the recollections of her own youth the glory that once was and that still gleamed as a memory within the dim and narrow confines of the Thuringian capital city. Out of the anecdotes that the grandmother told, the book grew which first made the name of the authoress famous, *Tales of the Councillor's Girls* (*Ratsmädelgeschichten*, 1888). "In the midst of the great German Empire," the

book begins, "lies a little city famed far and wide, Weimar in Thuringia. When my grandmother was a child there ruled over this country a very wise and good prince who because of his goodness and wisdom had prevailed upon great poets then living to come and dwell in his city. And because he was so exceedingly wise and was so beloved and honored by all, poets and scholars came from all sides, lived in the prince's city, and wrote there such splendid works that the whole world marveled. Even today what these men thought and wrote is the most beautiful thing that we know, and it will remain so for a long, long time to come. About these men everything conceivable has been often told and accurately described, and people will talk of them centuries hence. But by their side there dwelt in the city in those days many men of whom nowadays no more mention is made. They too experienced joys and sorrows; they too had their day, felt deeply, were glad and sad, and had hearts like the others."

Among these mute, inglorious personages of the great time belong the daughters of Councillor Kirst in Wünsch Street, Rose and Mary, two wide-awake, mischievous lassies who are the heroines of the book. Young Ernst von Schiller, the second son of the prematurely deceased poet, is their playmate; they make fun of August von Goethe as he goes a-wooing; they quarrel with the sour-visaged boor, Arthur Schopenhauer, as they go in and out of his mother's house, the novelist's; old Madam Kummerfeld, a former actress who in her youth had as Juliet inspired the Leipsic student Goethe, is their teacher in the art of sewing as well as making a courtly bow — which latter accomplishment they have occasion to practise when one day in the park they almost knock down the corpulent Grand Duke by running against him, and are then treated by him to good things to eat. With his knowledge they slip into the theatre without tickets, and when they have witnessed a performance of *Tasso* at which Goethe is present, they are so impressed that they follow the poet as, wrapped in his cloak,

he strides home in the darkness, and for a while they continue to stare up admiringly at his lighted windows. Nevertheless, at the next moment they scramble over the wall of the neighboring house and help themselves to the beautiful lilies which bloom in old Wieland's garden. In these stories the historical personages, which with artistic discretion are kept in the background, constitute after all only a decorative element; in the foreground happy youthfulness disports itself in its irresponsibility. "O you poor young folks of today," exclaims the young Weimar authoress, "if you had any idea what riches, what abundance of life the young folks had at their command at the beginning of our century, you would bitterly complain, you would seem to yourselves deceived and defrauded, old from the cradle, forced into the straight-jackets of duty!"

A certain disgust with the colorless life of the philistine borough into which Weimar more and more degenerated after Goethe's death may be read between the lines of this apostrophe. Repelled by the gloomy humdrum and filled with dreams of past greatness as well as with longing for a more abundant life in the future, the young writer felt the close confinement of her home town. In this state of mind she met the man who proved to be her fate. Since his first, unhappy marriage had been annulled according to Turkish, but not according to German law, she followed him to Constantinople, and Helene Böhlau became Madame Al Raschid Bey. The Orient furnished the German authoress with strikingly few motifs; but Munich, whither she later returned with her husband, became her second home. On the bank of the Isar lies the scene of her best novel, *The Switching Station* (1895). In this book she is a disciple of naturalism, not merely in respect to the fidelity with which life in the art centre and the restless haste and nervous disorderliness in an artist's family are depicted, but also in the use of symbolism after the manner of Zola: for the switching station, with its purposeless turmoil, its disquietude, its pulling and hauling, is a symbol for the noisy

life in general, and in particular for the comfortless, hapless marriage in which a delicately organized artistic soul is worried to death. The fate of the woman who becomes the victim of a man is the theme of the succeeding novels, *A Mother's Rights* (1897) and *Half Beast* (1899), in which Helene Böhlau enters the lists side by side with Gabriele Reuter and Marie Janitschek and other women as a passionate champion of the rights of her ever oppressed sex. From the point of view of literary art the immoderate formlessness of these partisan novels was an aberration; but meanwhile the writer has once more emancipated herself from such servitude to the cause. The finest understanding for feminine characters, all of which are children of her heart, cannot indeed compensate for imperfect comprehension of the masculine way of thinking. Strictly speaking, Helene Böhlau knows of only two sorts of feeling for men: hatred of the brutal beast and admiration for an ideal, which is born of longing to embrace a lofty, victorious personality. In real life she has found the fulfilment of her longing in her husband, the strange prophet who as half a Turk gathered about himself in Munich a queer circle of auditors for his mystical Oriental philosophy. To his memory she erected a dutiful monument in her last work *Isebies* (1911), an apology for her own life, her longing, her seeking, and her salvation. But even in this work the finest and the clearest portion is the narrative of her childhood in Weimar. To the unique charm of her native town, which like Bethlehem in Judæa was small and also great, Helene Böhlau returned in other stories of Old Weimar written before her latest work appeared. To this series belongs *The Ball of Crystal* (1903) with which our selections begin. Style and narrative art have matured; we have to do no longer with mere anecdote, as in the *Tales of the Councillor's Girls*, but with a more concentrated plot; the character of the heroine, which is symbolized by the title, is subjected to a more profound psychological diagnosis; but we are still taken with the same purity of

heart as in the earlier narratives, and the quintessence of this book, as indeed of the entire literary personality of the authoress, may be found in the final words of the *Tales of the Councillor's Girls:* "The kind, the imperturbable, who with gentle readiness take good or evil as it comes — they are the real heroes, not those who face life bristling like a porcupine. The only thing which can give our hearts peace and happiness on earth is good will toward men."

Clara Viebig is a less gentle nature. She is a poetess not so much of the heart and soul as of the impulsive temperament and the strong will. She has not passed through any vacillating development, nor has naturalism been for her as for Helene Böhlau a mere preparatory school or transition stage; on the contrary, in all her work she has consistently remained a disciple of Zola and has not shrunk from any of the brutalities of his method. There is not much to tell about the personal life of this authoress. Born at Treves on the Moselle in 1860 as the daughter of an official in the civil service, she was taken when quite young to Düsseldorf on the Rhine, but passed a part of her youth in eastern Germany, in Posen, the birthplace of her parents. After her father's death she came to Berlin to study music; here she became a writer, and now she is living as the wife of her publisher in the suburb of Zehlendorf. Her spiritual experiences are perhaps most clearly set forth in the novel *Long Live Art* (1899). The passionate struggles of a young authoress for literary success lead after many disappointed hopes and many disillusionments to the attainment of genuine good fortune in art and in domestic life as well. On her native heath the despairing woman is cured of her despair — this typifies all the work of Clara Viebig, which reveals itself as pure *Heimatkunst* in advance of the time when this label gained currency. To be sure, it is a triple home that Clara Viebig can call her own, the Rhine country, eastern Germany, and Berlin. As might be expected, the memories of childhood left the most lasting effect upon her. The Eifel, that bleak plateau between

the Moselle and the Rhine, with its broad melancholy heaths and bald craters of extinct volcanoes, with its dark lakes and lonely forests, is the district with which she is most familiar. The hard-headed, moody, quick-tempered peasants, whose stubbornness befits the volcanic origin of their mountains, appear in her first collection of short stories, *Children of the Eifel* (1897). In the Eifel is situated the *Women's Village* (1900), all the men of which seek their livelihood overseas, so that all the women swarm about the only man left at home, a cripple. The novel *John Miller* (1903) treats the tragedy of a rich man of the Eifel who goes to ruin in pride and blind presumption; *The Cross in the Venn* (1908) deals with the religious life of this district. The scene of the novel *The Watch on the Rhine* (1902) is Düsseldorf, where the difficult process of amalgamation between Prussians and Rhinelanders, first accomplished in 1870, is illustrated in the wedded life of a Prussian sergeant and the daughter of a Düsseldorf innkeeper. The struggle of racial incompatibilities which is here depicted with the most matter-of-fact objectivity, and which in a series of merry *genre* pictures is brought to a happy conclusion, is carried in another work to a frightfully serious tragic ending. *The Sleeping Host* (1904) takes us to the Prussian province of Posen and shows the effect of strife between German and Slavic elements, in the fate of Rhenish immigrants whose efforts to found a new home for themselves are brought to naught. A second novel of the eastern frontier, *Absolvo Te* (1907), is inferior to the first, not in power of characterization, but in range of subject. Still a third work treats the problem of a difference between blood and rearing, *A Mother's Son* (1906). The novel traces the development of the son of a peasant woman of the Eifel who has been adopted by a Berlin family and in whom, in spite of careful education, the evil disposition of his father comes to the surface. In this artificial treatment of the theory of heredity Clara Viebig's art does not appear to the best advantage; her

forte is rather unbiased objectivity and penetrating observation of every-day life. The other novels having their scene in Berlin are distinguished for a keen sense for realities, as, for example, *The Daily Bread* (1900), a treatment of the servant question which in the technique of Zola gives a panorama of the metropolis and of life in the lower strata. A rise above the level of naturalism may be noted in the fact that the last two novels of this author do not deal with the present but, like *The Watch on the Rhine*, revert to themes in the history of social development. *Those without the Gates* (1910) depicts the fate of the suburbanites who are submerged in the gigantic organism of the growing city; the latest novel, *Iron in the Fire* (1913), has for its subject the time from 1848 to 1866, the time of expectation; an old-fashioned Berlin smithy is the scene, the fire in the forge and the power behind the hammer are symbols of the growth of the nation. Only in the dim background does the figure of Bismarck appear, the smith who welded the parts of the empire into one; it is characteristic of Clara Viebig's art that she allows great historical events to be mirrored only in the little world of the actors in her little drama, whereas Helene Böhlau grants to the historical figures of Old Weimar participation at least in episodes. Clara Viebig can compass no great characters or persons of superior intelligence; even men she hardly shows otherwise than in their sensual brutality. She succeeds best with simple, vegetative natures of elemental instincts and eruptive passions, like the women of the Eifel, whose life of hardship, unhappiness in love, and maternal sorrows she knows how to represent with telling power. From the collection entitled *Forces of Nature* (1905) we have taken the story of a mother who for blind love of her son becomes an incendiary — a story which reveals in high degree the peculiar quality of this authoress.

The scenes of Clara Viebig's life and work are on a line running from west to east; the corresponding line for the following writers runs from north to south. Count Eduard Keyserling and Thomas Mann are both of North German

extraction and have both settled in Munich; both are moreover very similar in their high esthetic culture and in a certain languid aristocracy of feeling and ironical reticence; and their literary models (Dickens, Thackeray, Balzac, Fontane) were the same.

Count Keyserling (born in 1858 at Pelsz-Paddernin in Curland) had the same experience as Fontane, in that he was late in developing his particular style in narrative composition. When in the eighties he made his first appearance in literary circles in Munich, he essayed very naturalistic novels; his first, *Rosa Herz* (1885) deals with the fate of a poor victim of seduction. Thereupon followed a series of dramas (*Spring Sacrifice*, 1899, *Stupid Jack*, 1901, *Peter Hawel*, 1903) which in their delicate atmosphere, their finished technique, and the interest of their dialogue deserved more attention than they received. Not until after the dawn of the new century did the author find his true vocation in the telling of tales of his home country. *Beata and Mamie* (1903) and *Dumala* (1908) are the great novels; *Muggy Days* (1906) and *Gay Hearts* (1909) are collections of short stories. All revolve in the sphere of the East German country gentry, in their white castles reflected in lakes, in their garden pavilions, and on the broad tracts of their hunting preserves. It is always the same people with whom we have to do: imperious counts who wish to be admired and to enjoy themselves, and whose life consists of hunting, gaming, adultery, duelling, and ultimate return to impeccable correctness in their peaceful homes. In this world, "hung with fine white curtains," there are women with the fine pallor of the old families, they also full of longing for freshly pulsating life. When, however, the yearned-for great experience finally knocks at their door, they draw back disappointed. Thus it was with young Countess Billy when she eloped with her Polish cousin.

It is not this writer's business to preach new, revolutionary ideas and views. He narrates typical cases with the

dignified reserve of the skeptical man of the world, who knows how to weave in everywhere the comments of a shrewd philosophy of life, who bridles passion with strict self-control, and in the representation of the most tempestuous crises maintains sure mastery over expression and form. The writer himself may share with his creations their longing for fresh elemental power; but he is endowed with far too much of the traditional culture of his caste ever to allow himself any obstreperous accents. The words of one of his dramatic figures characterize his own art: "We no longer know how to underscore. Underscoring is in bad taste. Those people out there live on underscoring."

Longing for abundant pulsating life, and autumnal renunciation on the part of a decaying family, are also among the principal motifs in the work of Thomas Mann. "Life, revealing itself in eternal contrariness to the spirit and to art — not as a vision of bloody greatness and untamed beauty, not as something uncommon does it present itself to us uncommon people. On the contrary, the normal, proper, and lovely is the realm of our longing, is life in its seductive banality! He is far from being an artist, whose last and deepest yearning is for the superrefined, the eccentric and satanical, who knows no longing for the innocent, the simple and living, for a little friendship, devotion, confidential familiarity, and human happiness — the furtive and consuming longing for the raptures of the common place!"

These sentiments of Mann's Tonio Kröger might animate one of Keyserling's characters, but Keyserling would never express them in such impulsive fashion. Mann is much more subjective than Keyserling. In all the experiences of his characters he is mirrored himself, and all of his writings make and repeat one and the same confession as the foundation of his art, the solitude of the artist.

The cleft which separates two worlds is recognizable in his very parentage. Thomas Mann was born in Lübeck

in 1875, the son of a merchant and senator of the ancient Hanseatic city; his mother is a Creole from South America. In his elder brother Heinrich Mann, perhaps a more ingenious, but a less finished writer, of the nervous, ardently passionate, impressionistic sort, the exotic heritage has tended to predominate; in Thomas Mann the correctness of the austere Hanseatic city and her old traditions seems to be the strongest element. Because he cannot escape the exasperating incompatibility between citizen and artist, between the instinct for conformity and the will to be different, he fights this battle again and again, and bitter meditation upon it has given him the themes of his principal works.

Mann's chief work, indubitably one of the best German novels of the last decades, is entitled *The Buddenbrooks, the Degeneration of a Family* (1901). The book would perhaps never have been written without the example of Zola in *Les Rougon-Macquart,* but it is far from being a mere copy; for a much more personal conception of the subject and a tone of narration in which the finest irony is mingled raise it far above the arid level of the *roman expérimental.* In four generations, whose representatives are placed before us with uncommon plasticity and lifelikeness, the decaying family slowly passes across the stage. From generation to generation the robust, sober business sense is poisoned with a greater and greater infection of morbid feelings and hypersensitive nerves, until finally the vitality of the family goes out like a burnt-up candle.

The great novel was followed by a collection of short stories, *Tristan* (1903), from which we have selected *Tonio Kröger.* A tragedy of the Renaissance, *Fiorenza* (1905), develops the dualism between real life and artistic existence, between the proud joy of living and ascetic hostility to life, in two brothers of the house of Medici, Lorenzo and Girolamo, who are suitors for the hand of one and the same woman. The following novel, *His Royal Highness* (1909), shows how a prince, educated in aloofness from

life, is saved from a living death through love for an American heiress. Finally, there appeared only last year a masterpiece in the most exquisite style, the narrative *Death in Venice* (1913). It is a heart-felt confession, taking as its theme the chilling apprehension of approaching old age and death. In the late-awakening impulse of love for a young boy there is here a generally misunderstood symbol of longing for life. The figure of the hero, Gustav Aschenbach, evidently furnishes a key to unlock many mysteries in the artistic work of the author:

> He never knew the leisure, never the careless unconcern of youth. When in his thirty-fifth year he fell ill in Vienna, a keen observer once remarked about him in company, "You see, Aschenbach has always lived like this"— and he clenched his left fist—"never this way"— and he let his open hand dangle from the arm of his chair. That was indeed the case; and the moral valor about Aschenbach was that his constitution was in no sense robust, and that though called to unremitting exertion, he was not really born to it. . . . With a strong will and tenacity comparable to that which had subdued his native province, he worked for years under the stress of one and the same task, and devoted to its proper accomplishment all of his strongest and best hours. He almost loved the enervating, daily-renewed combat between his tenacious, proud, and often tried will-power, and this ever-growing fatigue, which was his secret and which the product should in no wise betray by signs of exhaustion or indifference.

Thomas Mann resembles his hero in being comparatively unproductive; but it should be added at once that no one of his works fails to exhibit the utmost of artistic finish. Unrelaxing attention and indefatigable effort to attain artistic form are the heritage of his North German descent, of which he perhaps became fully conscious in South Germany, in the city of more easy-going habits of life. In *Buddenbrooks* itself the difference between North and South plays an important part; Tonie, the youngest daughter of the house of Buddenbrook, is twice married, first to an unscrupulous speculator in Lübeck, the second time to a Munich dealer in hops, Aloysius Permaneder, who rescues her from the disgraceful position of a divorced

woman. This deliciously portrayed beer-reeking philistine, whose informality and whose wild oaths horrify the prim Lübeckers no less than his good-hearted *naiveté* amuses them, marries Tonie Buddenbrook, retires from business on the strength of her dowry, and as an owner of real estate and a gentleman of leisure passes the rest of his life in drinking beer morning and night, cutting coupons, and annually raising the rent of his tenants. Such a successful caricature splendidly embodies the stagnating spirit of the blissfully idyllic town which the metropolis of Bavaria has remained in spite of all its growth.

And yet, in no other German city is there so high a degree of artistic culture, and the odor of Munich beer seems to furnish a more favorable atmosphere for the creative artist than the *prestissimo* of life in Berlin, which steels the nerves of the energetic, rushing man of business. There are two sides to everything: the motto of the indolent man of Munich, "Let me alone" (*Mei Rua will i ham*) gives to art that which it needs above all else, time, contemplativeness, freedom. Nowhere can one so unrestrainedly cultivate one's own style of life as there. And withal, artistic freedom of life accommodates itself remarkably well with the political narrowness of the country under Clerical rule. The Bavarian phlegmatic temperament craves constant stimulation; the political strife, in which there is no embittered fanaticism, but which in all good nature sways backward and forward, is an indispensable condition of the national life. Combativeness and the lust of vituperation are in the blood of the Bavarian people; it is all one, whether we look for them in a riotous kirmess or in blunt ridicule, in the poetic improvisations of which the quick-witted peasants, being especially gifted in mimicry, are unsurpassed.

Bavaria is accordingly the particular home of German satire. The best German comic papers are published in Munich, and the most effective satirist of the present day is a Bavarian of the Bavarians, Ludwig Thoma. He is the

son of a Head Forester and was born in 1867 at that Oberammergau where all the inhabitants every ten years dismiss the barber and let their long locks curl about their necks, in order to perform before the assembled multitude their Passion Play, which is pleasing in the sight of God and profitable to them. Thoma not only grew up among peasants; later, as a lawyer in Dachau, he had abundant opportunity to become acquainted with their fondness for litigation, their avarice, and their cunning. Now he is merely an author. In winter he may be seen at Munich in company garb at first performances in the theatres; in summer, at Tegernsee he appears in the midst of his beloved peasants dressed in their costume, homespun jacket and leather breeches. In the same way his writings have two aspects, satire on society and tales of rustic life. In the comic paper *Simplicissimus* he has often published political verses over the pseudonym Peter Schlemihl; some of his dramas also (*The Medal,* 1901, *The Branch Road,* 1902, *The First-class Compartment,* 1910, *The Baby Farm,* 1913) assail with never-failing pungency the present governmental system in Bavaria; others (*Morality,* 1909, *Lottie's Birthday,* 1911) are directed with more general and less delicate ridicule against all sorts of common place morality and the excrescences of moral reform. Delicious are his stories of the little town, especially about the pranks that give expression to boyish impulses to incommode teachers, stern neighbors, and maiden aunts. These are told in the naïvely impudent language of the school-boy in *Tales of Bad Boys* (1904) and the continuation of this book, *Aunt Frieda* (1906). The philistine population of the little town, Bavarian administration of justice, scenes in the Munich street cars, and many another subject of that kind, Thoma humorously treats in *Judge Charlie* (1900) and *Tales of the Little Town* (1908), in the broad anecdotal style which he has made his own.

His other subject is peasant life. In this too he begins as a satirist, with his collection *Agricola* (1897); and the

manner in which he at first indulges in grotesque exaggeration of popular traits appears best perhaps in the introduction to the book, "adapted from Tacitus":

The German plain from the river Danube to the Alps is inhabited by the Baiovarii. I regard them as the original inhabitants of this land, self-raised, as they call themselves in their own tongue. It is difficult for immigrants to mingle with them. It is certain that foreigners could never be confounded with the autochthonous folk.

Since this Germanic stock has remained free from contamination through intermarriage with alien nations, it constitutes a separate, uniform race. Hence the same figure in all the representatives of this numerous nation, the same uncommonly developed hands and feet, the same hard, impenetrable formation of the head. Like their ancestors, they are fit for violent assault, and fond of it. They show great capacity for the endurance of fatigue and tribulation; the only thing they cannot endure is thirst.

This people is equipped with manifold weapons; but even in these they have more regard for usefulness than for beauty. Widespread is the short dagger which every mature man carries in the fold of his garment; but the use of it is not permitted — on the contrary, the powers that be seek to get possession of all such; whereupon the common man replaces the lost weapon by another. As missiles they have earthen mugs, with handles which make them likewise adaptable for delivering blows. At their gathering places every man, when strife arises, seeks to possess himself of as many of these as possible, and hurls them then uncommonly far. Most of the Baiovarii carry a sort of spear, or in their language, "chaser", made of the hazel of their forests, with blunt end, supple, and very handy. In the lack of these weapons, each man assumes any that chance may offer. Indeed, for this purpose even articles of household furniture, such as tables and chairs, are robbed of their supports. In high favor are also the constituent parts of garden inclosures. Before the beginning of the conflict the battle song resounds. It is not as though human throats, but rather as though the spirit of war were singing. They essay chiefly the formation of wild sounds, and close their eyes as though thereby to reinforce their utterance. They fight without a preconsidered plan of battle, each at the place that he occupies. Of shields they make no employment. The head is deemed a natural protection, which meets the shock of the attacking enemy and guards the rest of the body. Many even use the head for the purposes of attack, when other weapons fail.

In this ridicule of savage pugnacity one cannot fail to see the secret love of the writer for the uncouth power of

his sound-hearted and sound-limbed compatriots. This same love explains the contempt in which Thoma holds the sentimental depiction of parlor peasants which is so often met with in family magazines. He knows no glossing-over, and what is boorish in his peasants, he leaves boorish. But more and more he has developed from a satirist to a serious moralist of his native land. In his stories *Wedding* (1901) and *Matt the Holy* (1904) the satirical purpose predominates. But then, in his great novels, Thoma proceeds to more serious matters. One, *Andreas Vöst* (1905), which develops to a magnificent climax the uncompromising rebellion of a stubborn peasant against the superior resources of a malicious priest, with the consequent destruction of the poor victim of his own sense of justice, might be compared with Kleist's masterly narrative *Michael Kohlhaas,* if in the treatment of the antagonist Kleist's incorruptible objectivity were not lacking and the whole did not, therefore, ultimately turn into pleading for a cause. But when satire fails to amuse for bitterness, and humor fails to conciliate, the pictures become almost too gloomy and the moral purpose too obtrusive. Thus it is in the novel *The Widower* (1911). The folly of a lustful old peasant who in the toils of a scheming hussy supinely looks on while his property goes to wrack and ruin and his son becomes a murderer, is here treated with too harsh a naturalism. The same may be said of the drama *Magdalena* (1912), in which a rustic Virginius makes of himself the judge of his daughter who has fallen into a life of public shame.

The life of the closely related peasant stock of Austria has found hardly at any other hands than those of the Tirolese Karl Schönherr an equally unadorned depiction. Rosegger's Styrian peasants are, in spite of the pessimistic *Sylvan Schoolmaster,* drawn after all with much more extenuating gentleness. More recent literary products of Styrian writers are, however, no whit inferior in local patriotism to the works of the still living first master. The warmest praise of his home land has been sung by Rudolf

Hans Bartsch who, born in 1873 at Graz, lived for many years as an officer in Vienna, until in 1911 he returned as a retired captain to his native city. After an historical novel *When Austria Disintegrated* (1905), which dealt with the epoch of Forty-eight, and was reissued under the title *The Last Student,* Bartsch celebrated his greatest triumph with the novel *Twelve Men of Styria* (1908), a book of inexhaustible, exuberant youthfulness and contagious optimism. The careers of the twelve youths who meet on the common ground of love for the beautiful Frau von Karminell, and who set out together on the stormy path of life, are only loosely connected; and yet the book achieves a unified effect, thanks to the wonderful musical atmosphere which is its element, and to the pivotal position in it of province and city: "Graz, city lost in the expanse of nature, so still, so receptive and yet fulfilled as no other is with soft impressiveness; the green-dreaming, tree-rustling, gentle-singing city of Graz, animate beyond all great cities with the soul of nature." The next novel, *The Sons of Haindl* (1908), a collection of similar types of character in Viennese surroundings, is too much of a repetition not to have proved a disappointment; as was also *The German Sorrow* (1911). In the later Viennese novels *Elisabeth Kött* (1909) and *The Story of Hannah and her Four Lovers* (1914) Bartsch lost much of his original vivacity and purity of style, and the novel *Schwammerl* (1912), which revolves about the figure of the composer Schubert, falls in with the vogue of that novel of the artistic life which has of late been cultivated in somewhat routine fashion and to which —to mention only a few names — Goethe, Schiller, Grillparzer, Lenau, Wagner, and Heine in his last years, succumbed. Bartsch was indeed led to this theme by an elective affinity; for he is inspired in equal measure by love of music and love for Old Vienna, and he is capable of entering with entire sympathy into the spirit of former times. To this capacity his short stories entitled *The Last Days of Rococo* (1909) bear eloquent testimony, conjuring up as

they do with charming winsomeness the spirit of the epoch that preceded the French Revolution. The second collection of narratives, *Bitter-Sweet Love Stories* (1910), brings us back to Austrian territory. To this collection belongs *The Styrian Wine Carrier,* in which the ancient carefree joyfulness of the highway falls a victim to the modern rush of business. Is not the fate of the amiable, easy-going, reveling Styrian symbolical of the fate of the whole country of Austria, which is organized on the outgrown plan of a former generation, and is now placed in opposition to the iron necessity of modern progress? Bartsch has deeply felt the incompatibilities rooted in the Austrian character: there are two souls, one desperately clinging to the Austria of the good old times, to the long-lost lovely Vienna of the coach and post-horn, the other the soul of turbulent young Austria, with its eye on the knotty problems of the future. But the enervating atmosphere of literary Vienna, which Grillparzer once characterized as a "Capua in the world of spirits," is the natural element of Old Austria, and we suspect that Bartsch, whose rapid productivity defies stern artistic self-discipline, has not altogether escaped its dangers.

The Alemannic races on the Upper German territories reveal a greater toughness of fibre and more power of resistance. They are blunt individualists, whose love of country utters itself with less enthusiasm and attains to perfect certainty perhaps only after a longing for adventures abroad has been stilled.

Emil Strauss, the older of the two Swabian writers here represented (he was born at Pforzheim in 1866), lived for a while in Brazil; from his experiences there he derived material for some of his stories in *The Ways of Men* (1898), for his drama, unsuccessful from the point of view of technique, *Don Pedro* (1899), and for his first novel *Mine Host of the Angel* (1900), the tragi-comical history of a man who learns by experience, who deserts his wife and after a long series of disappointments returns humbled

to his home. The later narrative *Mara,* in the collection entitled *Hans and Grete* (1909), is also the fruit of exotic experiences. This account of a love in imagination has the same motif as one of the most original narratives of the Swiss Spitteler, *Imago,* with the only difference that in *Mara* over-excitation of the brain is motivated by tropical heat. Strauss is in all of his narratives an extremely acute psychologist, who everywhere concentrates his attention upon the development of character, and whose work, as appears in *Mine Host of the Angel,* is inclined toward a mild didacticism. This is especially noticeable in the work that first made his name famous, the novel *Death the Comforter* (*Freund Hein,* 1902), the story of a boy of musical disposition who is worried to death in school. Compared with English and American literature, German literature has been said to be poor in stories of childhood. This criticism hardly applies to the new century, which has been called the century of the child. The fate of little Henry Lindner who is to be transformed by hook or by crook from a dreamy musician into a circumspect efficient man, and who suffers shipwreck on the reefs of mathematics, reminds us in many ways of the tragedy of the last Buddenbrook, Hanno, whose delicate sensibility is crushed out by the discipline of the school. A few years later there appeared in Hermann Hesse's *On the Rack* (1906) another story of schoolboy martyrdom, and between these two pessimistic works lay two sunshiny novels of childhood, *Asmus Semper's Childhood Land* (1904), by Otto Ernst, and *Gottfried Kämpfer* (1904), by Hermann Anders Krüger. These were the most successful novels of those years; Strauss' *Death the Comforter* is, next to the conclusion of *Buddenbrooks,* the poetically most significant of these stories of childhood. The writer, rich in comprehension of the vitality of the problems and in the delicacy of his treatment of them, has not had to repeat himself: his novel *Friction* (1904) is a fine psychological study in the form of a love story, in which life undertakes the education of two recal-

citrant lovers; and his latest work, *The Naked Man* (1912), is a powerful historical novel.

Hermann Hesse, who is often grouped with Strauss, is, in spite of his belonging to the same stock, a different nature; he is more of a lyricist, and his lyrical poems, though less well known, take perhaps a higher rank than his novels. Even in these the lyrical mood outweighs the human action; he ponders the riddles of nature more earnestly than the riddles of humanity. Among human beings, however, his favorite is the gentle St. Francis of Assisi, to whom he has devoted a splendid little book.

Hesse was born in 1877 at Calw in Württemberg; it is his own youth that he describes in the novel *On the Rack.* After fleeing from the Theological Seminary at Moulbronn he became a machinist; then he worked in a bookstore at Basel, where he found opportunity to study at the University. He spent a few years at Munich, and finally made Switzerland his home by establishing himself in the neighborhood of Bern. In respect to literary relations he had even before this acquired a certain right to be called a Swiss; for his work may be regarded as a continuation of the line of development that runs from Jean Paul to Gottfried Keller. There is a kind of resurrection of Jean Paul in the wonderful descriptions of nature, the dreams of universal love and natural piety, which we find in Hesse's first great novel *Peter Camenzind* (1904); no writer since Jean Paul has bestowed such eloquent praise upon the clouds:

> Show me in all the wide world the man who knows the clouds better and loves them more than I do! Or show me the thing in the world that is more splendid than the clouds! They are playthings and balm for the eyes, they are a blessing and divine gift, they are wrath and omnipotent death. They are frail, tender, and peaceful, like the souls of the newly born; they are beautiful, opulent, and lavish, like good angels; they are dark, unescapable, and pitiless, like the messengers of death. They hover in silvery thin expanse, they sail laughingly white with a golden rim, they stand at rest in yellow, red, and bluish tints; they creep up slowly and darkly threatening like murderers, they rush with a headlong roar like

mad horsemen, they hang sad and pensive at equal heights like melancholy hermits. They have the forms of blessed isles and the forms of blessing angels; they are like threatening hands, fluttering sails, a flight of cranes. They float between God's heaven and the poor earth as fair symbols of all human longings, akin to both — dreams of the earth, in which her sullied soul flies to the embrace of the pure heaven. They are the eternal symbol of all wandering, all seeking, desiring, all homesickness. And as they hang timidly and yearningly and persistently between earth and heaven, so the souls of men hang timidly and yearningly and persistently between time and eternity.

From Gottfried Keller, on the other hand, Hesse has derived the specific gravity of realism; and so the romantic life of the peasant boy Peter Camenzind concludes, after protracted roving through Italy and France, like that of Green Henry, with a weary, resigned return home. The novel *On the Rack,* which represents a falling off after this brilliant beginning, was followed by a new efflorescence in Hesse's artistry with the novels *Gertrude* (1910) and the latest work *Rosshalde,* a story of matrimony which combines the former merits of poetic atmosphere with the merit of a greater concentration upon action. Between the two lie the collections of short stories *On this Side* (1907) and *Neighbors* (1908). From the second is taken the story here translated, *In the Old Sun,* which as an idyll of the Poorhouse has something of the qualities of Gottfried Keller, while the mystic setting is quite the property of the Swabian author.

From the half-Swiss author Hermann Hesse to the full-blooded Swiss novelists is but a short step. Among these, Ernst Zahn is the most widely read and the most fruitful. A succession of voluminous novels (*Erni Beheim,* 1898, *God's Puppets* [*Herrgottsfäden*], 1901, *Albin Indergand,* 1901, *Claire Marie,* 1904, *Luke Hochstrasser's House,* 1907, *Solitude,* 1909, *The Women of Tannò,* 1911, *The Apothecary of Little Worldville,* 1913) and an equal number of collections of short stories (*Heart Struggles,* 1893, *Echo,* 1895, *New Tales of the Mountains,* 1898, *Men and Women,* 1900, *The Shady Side,* 1903, *Heroes of Every Day,* 1905,

Those Who Come and Go, 1908, *What Life Destroys*, 1912) have come thick and fast; and since they all deal with the everyday fortunes of the simple Alpine villagers, it was inevitable that in course of time a certain satiety dulled admiration of the sheer inexhaustible store of motifs — for nobody can say that Zahn ever exactly repeats himself. In particular, his fellow-countrymen are no longer quite willing to regard him as the Swiss novelist *par excellence*. And yet Zahn is himself the very incarnation of a fundamental trait of Swiss character; namely, the peculiar blending of practical common sense and esthetic culture. Where else than in this veritable democracy could one and the same man day in and day out serve soup to thousands of travelers, sit down at his desk after the day's work was done and gather about him the children of his imagination, and then on the morrow as president of the diet guide the deliberations of representatives of his canton of Uri? His three professions of public man, innkeeper, and author, Zahn upholds with undiscriminating pride.

Ernst Zahn was born at Zurich in 1867 in the Café Littéraire, of which his father was lessee, and among whose habitués Gottfried Keller was reckoned. He took up the paternal business, beginning at the bottom of the ladder as a waiter in Geneva, Genoa, and Hastings, and in 1883 joined his father, who had meanwhile taken a lease of the railroad restaurant at Göschenen. At the last stop before entrance into the darkness of the Gotthard tunnel many a traveler to Italy has doubtless been struck by the classic features and the proud bearing of the restaurateur, without knowing that he saw before him the most widely read story-writer in the German language. As to his private life Zahn published a few years ago in the magazine *The Literary Echo* a few details from which we quote the following:

Little room with the writing table, the tall book-cases, the few pictures on the wall, and the immovable, grand, curious mountain always peering in at thy window — little room with the great hubbub all about thee, of

thee I am to speak, and of him who sits within thy coziness! It is not difficult to speak of thee: thou art a home, peaceful and lost to the world, although the life of the world surges around thee like the sea around an island. Behind thou hast the rumble of carts going hither and thither all summer long over three mountain passes, and before, the daily rattle and roar of the great railway trains of the Gotthard. And yet thou art peaceful and hast taught me that it is better to dwell in thee than in the bustling world, and hast taught me that I do not need many men to make me happy in thee. . . From the writing table there is every few minutes a call to the dining rooms on the ground floor, where the author is metamorphosed into a victualler. Many persons shake their heads at this transformation. To me the profession of my father is an object of affection; I owe it an assured livelihood. Who knows but that the author in me also owes it much of the spontaneity and joy of working?

But a fertile source of the author's joy of working is situated in a little dwelling of which I mean to speak last in this account of my houses. It stands in the valley of Göschenen, at the edge of the village, in the midst of a meadow. Round about tower the mountains; the gleaming glacier of Damma throws its light in through the window panes. The valley is filled with a great stillness. In the house five children, *my* children, live their untroubled lives, and my wife guards them well, with her gentle and skilful hand to lead, and her affectionate patience to understand her husband. In this, my mountain home, my life has found its haven. I hope to dwell there until I must move into the last resting place of my career; I hope to work, and I hope to attain to high and beautiful things; for I hear the bells of poetry mightily reverberating from my mountains, marvelous, richly harmonious voices; and perhaps I shall one day succeed in catching these tones in their clearest purity. Perhaps! There is hope; and hope is life!

The strenuous effort alluded to in these words, the great all-conquering achievement, the master chime which peals from the heights, has indeed not yet attained fulfillment. One might say of the work of Zahn as of the bell of Gerhart Hauptmann's bell-founder, "In the valley it vibrates, not on the heights." We find neither great problems of humanity and civilization nor real men of the heights. On the contrary, these "heroes of every day" are dwellers in the valley, harsh and hard as the walls of granite which narrow their horizon; and if the author puts into these rude vessels something of his own delicacy of feeling, as he

attributes to Stephen the Smith appreciation of the little Roman bronze figures which the trader has brought up from Italy, such ennobling ingredients can sometimes enter only at the expense of consistency of characterization.

A more primitive power is manifest in the other Swiss, Jakob Schaffner, who in still higher degree than Zahn deserves to be called a self-made man. Schaffner, who was born in 1875 at Basel, belongs with Hans Sachs and Jakob Böhme among the poetic shoemakers. His immature first novel, *Wanderings* (1905), has its best scenes in the workshop, and his later masterpiece, *Konrad Pilater* (1910), is another story of a fantastic journeyman shoemaker. As the author himself worked his way up with iron energy to culture and independence, so all of his creations are endowed with something of a vaulting ambition, which is not depreciated by being treated with a slight measure of irony. His *Jack Heaven-High* (1909) is a philosophizing journeyman who from every capital of Europe pours forth his lyrico-cosmic effusions, and the hero of his historical novel *The Messenger of God* (1911) is a Swiss dominie who at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War collects a motley rabble about him for new works of peace and single-handed makes of himself the restorer of a devastated community. But with all the scope of the theme there is a lack of genuine historical color; and compared with the great historical novel of Ricarda Huch, this anachronistic picture of the past seems like the story of another Robinson Crusoe. Schaffner's forte is after all the ground upon which he stood at the beginning; it is seen in the little idylls from the life of the laboring classes which make up the contents of his two collections, *The Lantern* (1905) and *The Golden Oddity* (1912). In the first collection, the story of *The Blacksmiths* is a gem of narration; and so is the story here reproduced, *The Iron Idol,* which also serves to illustrate the pedagogical tendency of all of Schaffner's work. The huge machine is a symbol for coöperative activity, to which the individual may not put himself in opposition;

and the restless spirit that essays opposition is transformed against his will from a disturber of the peace into the founder of a happy wedlock.

The final couple of our choice are two authors who have departed from the ways of *Heimatkunst.* Jakob Wassermann, born in 1873 at Fürth, begins at least as a delineator of the things of his home; for his first product, *The Jews of Zirndorf* (1897) is in its first part a legendary picture taken from the history of the Fürth ghetto, and in its second part there comes into the foreground the figure of Agathon Geyer, a Jewish messiah of the present, whose deep-seated longing to see God conquers the narrow spirit of the law, of slavery and asceticism. A pendant to this work is Wassermann's second novel, *The Story of Young Renate Fuchs* (1900). The development of the new woman is intended to be represented in this book, the woman who through all confusion and filthiness keeps her adamantine soul unscathed, to the moment when she attains her destiny, namely, to spend a night of love with the dying Agathon Geyer and to bear him the first child of a better time, Beatus, the fortunate. Sultry sensuality and outrageous bombast characterize the work, the action of which is not clearly set forth, but floats in a sea of nebulous somnambulistic vagueness. Visionary representation and mythical creation are indeed the program which Wassermann lays out for himself in a theoretical treatise, *The Art of Narrative.* Ernst von Wolzogen, the discoverer of Wassermann, and a critic who has perhaps contributed to an over-estimate of him, declares that this author, who stood, especially at first, under the influence of the most Asiatic of all the Russian novelists, Dostojewski, is the sole Oriental among the present generation of literary Jews. "A fancy which in its luxurious revelling in blood, splendor, and magnificence seems to us as Oriental as his meditative dreaminess and the subtle satisfaction with which he traces

the subterranean, labyrinthine paths of the life of the soul''—these are the salient features which Wolzogen finds in the work of Wassermann.

One side of this characterization is confirmed by the next two works, the novels *Moloch* (1903) and *Alexander in Babylon* (1904). In the former, a rustic of uncorrupted feeling and fanatical sense of justice loses his honesty and goes to ruin in the mendacity of urban ways of doing business; and in the latter, the Grecian hero and man of action is dragged into the intoxication of Oriental luxury, voluptous cruelty, and dazzling magnificence.

The other side expresses itself in the attempted psychological solution of the riddles of criminality. It is characteristic of Wassermann's predilection for these matters that in his novel *Kasper Hauser or Sluggishness of Heart* (1909) he seeks to interpret anew and on the basis of scrupulous attention to all the documents in the case the oft-treated story of the mysterious foundling who came to light in Nuremberg in 1828 and who was supposed to be a cast-off prince of Baden. Moreover, of the three narratives in the volume entitled *The Sisters* (1906), two are fantastically constructed criminal cases which endeavor suggestively to explain the unusual and the baffling by reference to mysterious undercurrents in the soul. One of these two stories is the *Clarissa Mirabel* here translated, and no word need be said of the technical virtuosity with which the most exquisite climax is attained through the utmost economy of means.

Many critics regard Wassermann as the pioneer of a new epic style. Even those who do not share this opinion cannot deny him tenacity of purpose and a clear conception of what it is that he aims to accomplish. Wassermann has selected the Oriental softness of the air of Vienna for his place of abode; it is possible that his *quasi* elective affinity with it will save him from the danger of falling a victim to the Moloch of the metropolis. In the year 1911 he wrote in an autobiographical sketch,

For ten years I have lived in the neighborhood of Vienna. There are German critics who cannot forgive me this choice of a domicile. But I still ask them to approve it. On my part I promise them never to give in to the Capuan lassitude which, I might add, is nothing but a legend among the superficial. True, the productive man is here more isolated, the man resolved to reach a goal is here left more to his own resources, than elsewhere; but many stormy winds blow, and if the post which one has taken is rendered dangerous, one's vigilance is enhanced. I am thirty-eight years old and have a feeling that I am standing at the beginning of my career. But to reach the end one would need to be — immortal.

The virtuosity of the narrator Wassermann may have served as a model for his younger fellow-townsman Bernhard Kellermann (born at Fürth in 1879). He too is a seeker after new forms of expression for psychical reactions; but he presents himself to us from the very first as a purer nature of greater delicacy and lucidity. He introduces himself as a troubadour of narrative art in his first two novels *Yester and Li, a Story of Longing* (1904) and *Ingeborg* (1905). With unutterable tenderness and richness of tone he depicts in each of these two novels the love-longing of a solitary nature, the substance of which is trembling yearning, and the fulfilment of which is a fading dream. A solitary figure is the hero of the third novel, *The Fool* (1909), as well. It is a young clergyman who settles in a small Franconian town with the sole purpose of doing good. He visits those who are weary and heavy-laden; with pathetic faith in the goodness of humanity he sees in every man a brother, and finally he suffers the Saviour's fate of pining away and dying unrecognized for what he was. This is Kellermann's profoundest and best work, and it would deservedly be reproduced here if considerations of space did not compel the selection of a shorter narrative. As such a narrative *God's Beloved* (1911) suggested itself, the work of a later period. For about the year 1910 a clearly recognizable change takes place in Kellermann's work; he goes forth into the world, and sojourn abroad causes the gentle dreamer to awaken

into an energetically aggressive, almost brutal man of action. The sentimental stories of the heart are followed by works of keen intuition, in which with compelling suggestiveness strange human communities are comprehended and presented in the characteristic atmosphere of their milieu. What we find in the insane asylum of *God's Beloved* we find also in the lives of Breton fisherfolk in the novel *The Sea* (1910); it is unadulterated primitive nature, which blends the roar of billows and the instinctive ingenuousness of the islanders into a mighty harmony.

If Kellermann's development should be taken as pointing the way for the German novel of the future, we should have to conclude that *Heimatkunst* has been supplanted by exotic art. Specialties are being cultivated, like that of the promising Willy Seidel (*The Garden of Shuhan, Sakîje's Song*) in Oriental themes. Interest is growing in the literature of travel, and the great publishers are already paying the traveling expenses of their authors, in order that they may see something of the world and write about it. This is the manner in which Hermann Hesse's *Trip to India* came into existence, and Kellermann has similarly published two books on Japan (*A Promenade in Japan*, 1911, *Sassayo Yassal,* 1913). The danger of this tendency lies in the confusion of poetic invention and journalistic report. Kellermann's most recent novel *The Tunnel* (1913), which sold inside of a few months to the number of a hundred thousand copies, cannot be regarded as a genuine work of art. It is not " the epic of iron and electricity, the Odyssey of modern engineering and capitalism " which it was perhaps intended to be, but a fantastic special article spun out into a moving-picture series of impressions of America and the possibilities of technical accomplishment. As such it is a great proof of talent. This we perhaps see most clearly if we compare it with Hauptmann's *Atlantis;* for we then perceive how much sharper are Kellermann's eyes and how much more takingly he knows how to reproduce the bustling confusion of the modern mart. But it is rather a caricature

of the present than a Utopia of the future, and the idea of the novel is lost in the abundance of individual motifs. It is to be hoped that this alienation is not symptomatic in the development either of the gifted author or of German literature as a whole. National questions will in the coming years summon Germany from fantastic world problems back to consciousness of herself.

The technical possibility of the Atlantic tunnel, upon which Kellermann has founded his novel, is questioned by engineering experts. Nevertheless, the idea of the tunnel remains a symbol of the need which the continents of the earth feel, of overcoming the distances that separate them and of approaching and comprehending one another in ever closer commerce and mutually profitable exchange. Where technical means fail, the problem remains unrestricted for the human mind. The more each individual people gives full expression to its national character, the better will that world literature for which we strive succeed in contributing to a mutual understanding on the part of the several peoples. And when, as at present, the sea is lashed by frightful storms, a safe conduit must lead from one national spirit to the other — a conduit in the deep, which remains undisturbed by the waves of passion that agitate the surface.

HELENE BÖHLAU

THE BALL OF CRYSTAL (1903)

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N the long, bare slope of the Ettersberg lay the buildings that marked the centre of an estate, not far from the Sperber property, but not, like it, embedded in swelling fields on the side of the steep road where the land lay broader and less precipitous. It lay nearer to the wooded mountainside, so that the farm-buildings could look down a little haughtily on those of the Sperber place — although there was really no reason for it, since the latter was not at all inferior either in extent or in great straw-thatched barns and stables or the stately dwelling-house.

The estate that lay nearer the woods belonged to an old soldier, Captain Rauchfuss, who, after a busy life in war and peace, had retired and come back to his native town a little stiff in the legs, to find a corner where he could live on his little pension in quietness.

But after a few years of rest the querulous veteran had blossomed out into the likeness of a lively fellow in the prime of life, who enjoyed a special reputation among the Weimar townspeople as a jolly companion. And so it came to pass that he finally installed as his wife up at the Ettersberg the daughter of his housekeeper, a young widow, and thus became not only a landed proprietor but the husband of a nice little woman to boot. He sat perched like a falcon above the cramped little town, where so many

strange and remarkable things were going on, things that seemed quite unnecessary to the old soldier.

Celebrities were going in and out down there in the narrow streets, who were neither princes, nor generals, nor even captains, and yet the people looked after them with respectful curiosity—mere quill-drivers! It was too absurd.

As for the widow and the estate, they were not too well off in the hands of the old soldier. He drove away from the Ettersberg oftener than was really necessary, down to the "Elephant," where he stopped and addressed forcible language to the hostler. He spent more there than was quite wise, in order to impress his importance upon the "Elephant."

The pleasant little widow had abandoned her comfortable widowhood without sufficient reflection; and now she had to put up as best she might with the difficulties of Herr Rauchfuss's disposition—sighing or complaining would do no good.

"You ought to have taken more time to think about it," was all the answer she got from her light-hearted husband. "What made you marry an old soldier? You know that isn't the same thing as a grandmother!" So she could only try and content herself, and go on looking after the considerable estate alone.

Frau Rauchfuss became the mother of a little daughter, a regular ruddy-golden fox's cub. That it was not a boy his wife had borne him annoyed Captain Rauchfuss.

"Thunder! This won't do—it's ridiculous! Me bringing women-creatures into the world! Really, my dear . . . and such a little vixen as that!"

Yet he had himself a red brush of hair on top of his head and a thick, fair moustache.

"Oh, it's too absurd," he said. "To think that I've risked my skin all these years to come down to sitting at home within four walls and trotting about after a little brat of a girl! Don't come near me with it—I won't touch the creature!"

HELENE BÖHLAU

Captain Rauchfuss was angry and out of humor. To be a country gentleman and husband of the pretty widow was well enough; but father of a family — that didn't suit him at all; it was not in his line.

And oftener than before he had his trap hitched up and drove down into Weimar; or else he went shooting over his own ground, or to Sperber's to play bulldog with the old man and any one who happened in, or bézique with the pastor.

He was on specially good terms with old Sperber, because he too had a strong objection to the way things were going down in the town. "That's all silly impudence down there," he would say. "Well, we'll see how far they'll go with it — we'll see. Those fellows in the town might give over scribbling; no cock would crow the louder, nor would loaves of bread get any smaller. But we . . .! Suppose we up there, and people like us up and down the country were to stop working, what do you think would happen then, my friend? Simply the end of the world — all up, done!

"And so I don't set foot down there, if I can help it. I don't let it irritate me any more — God forbid. I'm very well off up here, I'm bound to say — and I wouldn't change places with any of those frogs that have swelled to such unnatural proportions down there in the marsh."

Indeed, the old fellows up on the Ettersberg often held discourses over their bézique which were almost blasphemous, if you consider that they were talking about the greatest man of Germany, without whom Germany would not be Germany; the man to produce whom nature labored for thousands of years, tossed up millions and millions of stupid or average heads, more or less lacking in sense and reason.

That down there in Weimar at last the barren tree of humanity had borne a fruit seemed to the card-players of the Ettersberg a matter of no importance; but the tree went on producing its green leaves quite joyously. To

them this fruit, indeed, seemed to be not a fruit at all but a blister, a perfectly unnecessary excrescence.

And they had nothing to complain of, heaven knew, up on their Ettersberg; their fine properties were prospering.

Herr and Frau Sperber worked together, getting through the day's business honestly and good-humoredly. Very early in the morning you might see brisk Frau Sperber in her pink print apron, with her keys jingling at her waist, cross the courtyard to hold a general inspection of the stables and stock-rooms; and Herr Sperber's huge rubber boots carried their fat little master through hedge and ditch, over ploughed field and meadow and woodland.

On the Rauchfuss place a brave woman was working beyond her strength; but she made it go — the two properties showed but little difference. To be sure, it would have been much easier for Frau Rauchfuss if her jewel of a husband had been of a less jovial disposition and had not considered it his principal duty to show the people down in Weimar that persons of importance lived up on the Ettersberg, and to prove to them that no one could tell, even when he had his heaviest load on, just how much he was carrying. He could rise from his accustomed table and march to the door just as straight as when he came in; and the exhibition of this faculty called for constant repetition.

If Frau Rauchfuss had not had her little daughter Beate, she might have looked a long time for the joys of life.

The time came, however, when the child was big enough to dance about in farm-yard and garden, looking like a flower with long golden stamina. She was simply brimming over with merriment and delight in being alive; and now Captain Rauchfuss condescended to take notice of his daughter. He brought her home all sorts of toys and trifles, and took great pleasure in seeing how quick and clever the little creature was, in watching her scramble about and in listening to the soft lips repeat in sweet tones the old soldier's expletives that she heard him use.

* * * * * * * * * *

When Frau Rauchfuss's treasure grew to be a pretty little schoolgirl, it befell one day that the mother went down to the town with a heavy heart, to ask advice of her doctor about a trouble which for some time she had been silently carrying about with her, and which had made her work a heavy and oppressive burden. After long and anxious consideration she had finally made up her mind to the step, and gone off with a fervent prayer and a passionate kiss to her little girl.

And now, as she drove home again in her light carriage, it seemed to her as if, since she came down, the beautiful world had been transformed into a dark and unfamiliar place. She had set out with an anxious heart, and had had no one to speak an encouraging word to her; but still it was only down at the very bottom of her heart that there crouched, half hidden, the fear of what was so hard to realize — that her life might be wiped out.

Now she knew it was true. She was nearing the end of her days. The easy-going every-day life, that went about its business as if there were never to be an end, had been suddenly rent asunder; and through the gap the laboring soul stared out into empty darkness.

It was so that Frau Rauchfuss came home; the well-known road looked terrifying and strange to her, the golden grain in the fields by which she passed, as the wind went over it, bowed sadly to her because she must die . . . she . . . she alone of all the world. What was the death of others? An empty word. To her alone death meant something. Now for the first time it was a serious matter — the very first time on earth.

And no one had compassion on her. Her old coachman sat on the box with bent back and urged the horses to a trot. *He* was not going to die — no, only she. To herself, the poor unlearned woman that shrank back in her terror against the hard leather cushions was the world, the big splendid world; with her all its splendor would perish.

And this death-struggle of the world went on beneath her dotted blue Sunday dress, which she had put on for the

difficult journey to the town. Was the seat of this bitter struggle in her breast? Was it in her flesh and bone — in her beating heart — in her poor aching head? Yes, *where* was the conflict going on? Could she point with her finger and say "Here?" O mystery of mysteries — where is the poor Ego with its cosmic suffering? Is it leaning against the hard cushions of the carriage? Is it flesh and bone — is it a living point, in which all this pain is now alive?

The woman's passive nature woke up, became sharply penetrating, was alive for the first time. Struck through by the certainty of death, she became conscious that she was alive — almost as it was when she had her first consciousness of her child's life, in the same mysterious and yet certain way.

Then she shut her troubled eyes; and before her mind rose up her little golden-haired child, her only treasure, her darling. Burning tears flowed from her eyes, and her own life, the sacred centre of life, was again shaken, this time by pure love and anxiety about her dearest. Who would care for the child — who in all the world? "Only a few more years," she sobbed, "so that they shan't spoil her!"

And as this torture grew overpowering, a ray of comfort stole into her darkened soul. Who knew whether it was as bad as they thought? And though she had seen her own mother die of the same disease, why might it not be different with her?

So she went on from one stage of suffering to another, broke down under her cross only to raise herself again, and again to fall, as once our Lord and Saviour did.

When she drove into the courtyard, her face was calm, her tears wiped away. This she had done automatically, of long habit. It was time now for her to be silent as to her suffering, and to live what must be wholly within herself.

"Where is Beate?" she asked the maid.

"With the master, in the garden."

The mother set out to find her, for she needed to fold her child in her arms, and went through the house into the garden.

When she drew near the great lime-tree, which was now in full bloom and looked like a fine golden net shot through with glimmering golden pearls, she heard the powerful laugh of her lord and master, and the sweet voice of her child like the twitter of birds answering it.

"Tubby," he cried in his mighty bass, "you're a little rogue!" The child laughed aloud.

With disquiet and emotion the mother drew nearer. On the wide bench under the tree sat the captain, a bottle of wine by his side. He was making the child drink from his glass.

"The youngster has a good capacity," he muttered with a grin. "Now dance some more, Tubby!" The child skipped and danced, her red-gold hair tumbling about her flushed face. "Confounded little witch! A regular soldier's girl!" the merry old fellow growled in his red beard. And the evening glow shone upon the red beard of the father and the red wealth of hair of the dancing child.

"They are of one blood," she said to herself; and she stood as if everything were over already, and she only a departed spirit watching.

Then anger, a deadly anger, rose up in her. She rushed at her husband. "What are you doing to her?" she cried in anguish. "Look — only look! You've let her drink too much! Oh . . .!"

"Well, what of it?" said the captain with a thick tongue, taken aback by the sudden onslaught.

Little Beate stopped dancing, frightened, and looked at them with strange, doubtful eyes.

"Oh, you finicky creatures! What wishy-washy stuff! Women are fools! I should think a fellow might be allowed . . ." growled Herr Rauchfuss.

The child made an odd movement, stretched out her

arms to her mother, staggered and fell, her face hidden by her arms, sobbing. The mother bent anxiously over her.

"There, Tubby — don't be a baby!" stammered the old man. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself — a good stomach isn't upset by a couple of mouthfuls! You a soldier's daughter!"

The mother took the little girl in her arms and carried her to the house, paying no more attention to Herr Rauchfuss, who looked after her with a forced laugh.

In the room where she and the child slept, she laid Beate, still dressed, on the bed. The child kept on sobbing; her face was burning, and her eyes glowed as with fever. Frau Rauchfuss knelt by the bed in grief and fear. What was she to do? She simply did not know. To whom could she commend her poor little girl? Now that she had acquired certainty about herself, she felt for the first time her weakness and helplessness. At the physician's words a heavy burden had fallen upon her which she could not shake off.

As the darkness slowly crept into the room, she still knelt there, holding her child's hand and sadly racking her brains. Finally she undressed the child, who was now fast asleep, and herself lay down to rest.

She had the feeling that she was only a guest in her own house. Anguish came over her, and fear; the weight on her heart was as though she were buried for all eternity under a huge gloomy mountain. Plans of all sorts chased each other feverishly through her mind. What could she do? She thought of going to all the people she knew, whom she felt to be kind-hearted and begging them to watch over her child; to the Sperbers, her neighbors, to old Frau Kummerfelden who had a sewing-school in Weimar, to her pastor. She found few, as she passed them in review for qualities of heart and head, of whom she could be sure that they would not soon forget her prayer.

At last she grew weary of thinking and planning, and nestled down upon the bosom of her weariness as in her mother's arms. A mournful old hymn that she had been used to sing went through her head before she fell asleep:

A stranger and a pilgrim
On this terrestrial sphere,
Be peace, O Lord, my portion
While yet I tarry here.

Let me not fix my dwelling
Here on a foreign shore:
The heart to earth is fettered
That seeks of gain a store.

I'll wear but pilgrim's clothing,
O Lord, while here I stay;
For all our cherished treasures
The winds must bear away.

The sun of every mortal
Goes down at last in night,
And flown before you taste it
Is every dear delight.

The next day, in the bright summer evening light, Frau Rauchfuss took her child by the hand, and they went through the garden and passed out of a little gate to a narrow path that ran through swelling, sunny fields up to the wood; then they rambled slowly under the trees.

Little Beate clung close to her mother, for this was a rare treat to wander in such a holiday fashion with the busy, hard-working woman. "Look, look, mother!" she kept crying at every moment: "There comes something! There's something! Listen — a woodpecker! a deer!"

The arms of the sturdy ten-year-old quivered with joy. Frau Rauchfuss felt her child's delight in life. It went keenly to her heart, and she pressed the little girl closely to her. "Ah, if God would only grant, dear, that everything might go on just as it is!"

They came to the other side of the wood which lies like a broad band across the slope of the Ettersberg, where there was a very old wayside shrine without a saint. The saints had been too long exposed to the weather and to the onslaughts of Protestantism, and were worn away, broken, and vanished. Nothing was to be seen but a dilapidated

low wall, on which the sorrowful Mother of God had once stood. Frau Rauchfuss sat down wearily on it and lifted her child to her lap. Together they looked out silently over the world which is closed to the people of Weimar, the world that lies behind the Ettersberg, a sunshiny, grain-bearing landscape, over which lay the last warm, lingering rays of the evening sun.

"What's the matter, mother? You're so quiet!"

"This time yesterday I had to carry you to bed because you had drunk too much." The child hid her face in her mother's neck. "Other children," she went on calmly, "while they are young, have a mother to watch over them. The time will come when you will have none. Other children have a father who helps them and advises them. That your father cannot do. Presently you will be quite alone, and will have to help yourself in every difficulty, and at the same time to look after your father and see that nothing happens to him."

The child raised her head and looked at her mother with astonishment. "You will be all alone; you must learn to think now what is right and wrong." Tears sprang to the eyes of the frightened child. The mother's eyes were as moist as the little girl's; and they gazed at each other with sad, uncertain faces. Frau Rauchfuss let her head fall on the soft, yielding shoulder of her child, and a mighty sob tore itself loose from her laden heart. The loving fair-haired child stroked her mother's face and pressed more closely to her.

"I am ill, my darling—I cannot live very much longer; and I'm so worried I don't know what to do, because I must leave you alone with your father. No one will look after you."

A sort of convulsion passed through the child's body, which the mother felt in the clinging arms. Then the little thing let go of her, and took the edge of her apron and passed it gently across her mother's eyes. "Don't cry," she said—"I shall be all right." Frau Rauchfuss looked down into a pair of earnest and determined eyes. "Put

your head down on my shoulder again, and don't worry," said the child. The mother's heart was wonderfully lightened; she felt that she had with her a noble little being who could bring her comfort.

"If you die," said the child gravely, "will they put you in a coffin and carry you away and put you in the ground and cover you all up with earth?"

"Yes," said the mother.

"Won't you ever be able to come back?"

"No. Then I shall be with God."

"Is God good?" asked the child.

"Yes — God is good."

"Good . . .?" the child said thoughtfully.

The mother looked at her with surprise. "Other mothers don't tell their children when they are going to die; but I had to — it was needful that you should know."

"That's all right," said the child; "tell me everything. Tell me all I must do at home, after you're dead. I'll look after father. . . . And when are you going to die?"

"I don't know yet."

"Well, then . . ." said the child. They sat a while in silence on the low wall, on which in the times long ago the statue of the sorrowful Mother of God had stood. The child was not crying now, but gazing steadily and seriously before her. The mother also wept no longer; she had found comfort, and looked down wonderingly at the strong, grave little thing that sat by her side. From this day she felt herself no more alone or comfortless.

And when, a year later, the time to die really came, and she held the hand of Beate, now eleven years old, in hers, she felt confident that the child would know how to help herself and others. She commended her to God, but to no one else. In the last hard moments of the struggle she felt that she had some one noble and strong by her, comforting her with silent power.

* * * * * * * * * *

And now Captain Rauchfuss was all alone with his little "Tubby."

His wife had often been an uncomfortable companion to him. He had imagined something quite different under the name of a wife; and now it was not so very different with his little "Tubby." He expected to find in her a pretty little plaything, and began to realize that instead he had got growing up in his house a small person whom he had to respect, a manager.

He went off to the town with just as uncomfortable a conscience as before, and growled in his red beard at womenfolks that put on airs, whom a man would have to show their place or send to the devil.

Frau Rauchfuss had taken care to provide a capable woman to look after the house and a bailiff for the estate, so that Beate's inheritance might be kept in good condition in spite of her light-headed father. In this plain and thrifty company Herr Rauchfuss was not at all at his ease. He went on drinking as before; and it was no longer requisite that it should be the "Elephant" where he washed down his worries and his ill-temper. Any tavern would do, even up behind the Ettersberg—he was not so particular. But he still remained a reputable member of society with his wits about him, behaving with perfect propriety in the tavern parlor and still proud of his ability to walk and talk straight after an indefinite number of glasses.

As Beate grew older, she went down every morning at five o'clock in the milk-wagon to the town, winter and summer, to go to school, and got down in the Entenfang at Madame Kummerfelden's. The child stayed with her until school began, had dinner with her at midday, took part in the famous sewing-class with the other girls under the kind, lively teacher, and then went home in the wagon when it brought the afternoon milk.

Good Frau Kummerfelden took a great deal of pleasure in the child's company—but she had some left over for the

father also. When, arrayed in one of her flowered dresses and a cap tilted up over her still youthful face, she took her coffee comfortably on Sunday afternoons in the little house in the Entenfang, it was not at all disagreeable to her to have the old sinner pass an hour with her. He got two or three drinks of schnapps, some of the best snuff any nose could wish, and extra strong coffee, that even a throat as hardened as his could taste when it went down.

"It's good to see something like a man now and then," she said; "and Rauchfuss with his red beard and his giant stature and his mighty stride reminds an old woman like me that there are still men on earth, which one goes near to forgetting in these endless sewing-classes of wretched little girls!"

And, to tell the truth, she liked just such an old reprobate. "Yes," she said once to her friend, "if the good God were a woman, which isn't such an impossible thing to imagine, the men would get a pretty good deal up above. The worst scapegraces would be handled most graciously, as they are here on earth — where a man can do without any morals and be loved and run after because he's got a way with him." By such discourses the wise woman established herself in the captain's favor, and was able to make herself very much at home with him. Often she scolded him as if he were a schoolboy — but he took it in the friendliest fashion.

"With a man you must never come straight out with a thing. Spread plenty of honey about your mouth, and while they're licking it off they get the right thing with it, what they should get. That's the only way." So said the old woman often. And thus she gave it him roughly and merrily, like many another clever woman, and had a submissive friend for her pains.

The captain was foolishly vain of "Tubby's" beauty. The old friends were sitting together one Sunday afternoon in the little house in the Entenfang — the captain and the old actress turned sewing-teacher. "Well, Rauchfuss has

got a pretty good-looking daughter, eh, my good Kummerfelden? Such plump, firm arms — and the walk of her! A well set up creature — and then her red-gold hair, and her confounded eyes! Eh, Kummerfelden, I didn't do a bad piece of work there, did I? Look at all the generation that's growing up — can you show me her like?"

"Now, now," said Frau Kummerfelden; "you needn't be stuck up about it, my good sir. She is more than half the daughter of her noble mother."

"Eh, what? Noble?" said the captain. "Deuce take it — beauty's the thing in a woman. There you are!"

"You old fool!" said Frau Kummerfelden. "What was it kept your property in such fine condition? Was it your wife's beauty, or her ability?"

"Ah, bah! Of course non-essentials have their use too. But the main thing . . . Look — she might have gone down on her knees to me, and I'd never have married Frau Rauchfuss if she hadn't been such a fetching little thing."

"The Lord have mercy on you men!" said Frau Kummerfelden, stirring the sugar in her coffee. "You choose one that takes your fancy, and you call her beautiful as long as you care for her. What sort of a life did your wife have up there, lonely and deserted, as if she'd married a log of wood?"

"I say, Kummerfelden! Thunder — you're saying a good deal!"

"Because it's the truth!" said Frau Kummerfelden crossly. "And a rocking-horse would make as good a father as you are to that dear child. What kind of a way is that to do — to come home drunk at two o'clock in the morning, without a thought for the poor little thing that's waiting for you half asleep to help you to bed, you old rascal? And at that hour of the morning you make the good little thing get you a cup of coffee; and you take it like a thankless fool. Pooh, captain, I don't expect any man to be a pattern of morality and temperance. But even for a

man there are *some* limits — and those limits you overstep, my good sir!"

On this particular day Frau Kummerfelden was more than usually put out with her old friend on account of something that had just come to her ears. But none the less she poured him out his third cup of strong coffee, and waited on him just as attentively as if he had been Saint Nicholas himself.

"And another thing," she said — "do you suppose the good child ever talks of the way you go on? Not a syllable! People might tear her in little pieces and they wouldn't get a word out of her that wasn't to your credit."

"A soldier's child — damn it all!" cried the captain, bringing down his fist on the table. "She gets that from me, the little rogue!"

Frau Kummerfelden put up both her busy hands to her big cap, as if to protect it from hearing impossible things. "Lord save us!" she said. "There's no use talking to people like you."

When Captain Rauchfuss's daughter had reached her seventeenth year, it came to pass that the old man got involved in a love-affair. On his Sunday visits to Frau Kummerfelden about this time he had often found there a neat little widow who professed a charming devotion to her old teacher. After her husband's death she had been left in poor circumstances. She came to consult Frau Kummerfelden very seriously about a project of settling down in Weimar as a nurse; and she made it all so touching and edifying that the captain, who happened to be present at some of these discussions, found his heart growing quite warm. Moreover, the little woman had a fascinating heart-shaped face, broad in the brow and pointed at the chin, and a pair of round, merry brown eyes.

"That'd be the kind of nurse for me," said the captain; "a lively creature, who'd make the whole business look less bad. It would be rather fun!"

"Shame on you, old simpleton!" said Frau Kummerfelden crossly.

"Well, but, Kummerfelden," said the captain, "you're a stately old frigate with that cap of yours. A light modern craft like our Marianne sails in different waters from such a venerable ship of virtue — eh, Frau Marianne?"

"Oh, really, captain," pouted the little woman. "Do you think I am not serious about all this?" And once more she paraded her virtues and her edifying design before the eyes of the good old woman and Herr Rauchfuss.

"A devil of a girl!" muttered the captain in his red beard.

"Oh yes," said the neat little woman, making a charming gesture with her little heart-shaped head, about which she had tied a snow-white three-cornered piece of linen to give herself a tidy and almost nunlike appearance — "oh yes, I like that! A devil of a girl. . . . Well, you'll find out what sort of a girl I am if you ever get into my hands! I'd take charge of the cooking as well — nobody knows how to get up tempting little dishes for an invalid's appetite, so that his spirits begin to come back to him at the very smell of the broth I make him. And another thing I may say — with me a patient can save on doctors' visits. I learned a great many things from my poor mother — all kinds of wonderful remedies, for gout and things like that . . . the doctors' noses are out of joint.

"Haven't got it!" said the captain.

"Well, so much the better," said the little woman. But I should be in demand, I think. For who is there now? A couple of old slow-coaches, that rattle at every move they make, and your friend the old raven-mother, Frau Kummerfelden, whose rough paws would kill anything at all delicate."

"Now, now," said Frau Kummerfelden, "you mustn't say anything about the raven-mother — she's a splendid old soul."

"Soul, perhaps . . . but a little too much body with

it!" said the little woman, spinning round to emphasize her dainty figure.

"Well, facts are facts," said Frau Kummerfelden. "The raven-mother is perhaps a trifle massively built. To be sure, last winter, when I was full of all kinds of pains, she picked me up out of bed and put me in again like a child. It's true she puffed and snorted over it as if she'd been Saint Christopher, which wouldn't suit everybody."

"No, no, no," said the little widow, "one must know how to move without making a noise."

One day the pretty little woman said, "It's time for me to be getting home now — my gentlemen will be waiting for me. One of them will need me to get his beer for him."

"Gentlemen?" said the captain, taken aback. "What kind of gentlemen have you got?"

"For board and lodging," she said; and her merry heart-shaped face with its round brown eyes looked up rather challengingly at the old soldier.

"The devil!" he cried.

"What's the matter with you?" said Frau Kummerfelden. "It's a very good thing that Providence has sent a couple of decent, sensible men into this part of the town, or how should the poor thing live?"

The captain laughed a little awkwardly. When she had gone, he got up stiffly from the table and walked about the room. "That boarder business doesn't please me at all," he said crossly.

"Look at the man!" laughed Frau Kummerfelden. "Captain, you needn't worry yourself. She's so clever that you have no thread fine enough to thread her needle."

From that day neither the captain nor the little widow was ever missing from Frau Kummerfelden's on Sunday afternoon, until it got too much for the old lady. It was some time before she began to notice that the captain and the young woman were getting to be on terms of courtship.

"O Lord," she said within herself, "Thou hast chosen to ordain that my eyes should never see a man who couldn't

get a woman, a man whom no woman would look at. Amen."

When she finally became aware of what was going on, she began to make excursions into the country on Sunday afternoons. She took her sewing-bag, put on a big hat over her cap, dressed herself in a becoming flowered dress, and locked the door of the house in the Entenfang behind her. Then she went off to contemplate God's free nature, picking up on the way a few rolls at the baker's, so that she might have something to dip in her coffee at Rödchen, Tröbsdorf, or Süssenborn.

"Well," she said to herself, "we've got 'Tubby' to the point where she doesn't need a stepmother; it's quite unnecessary that she should have one at all, least of all Frau Marianne. I believe in giving every one their due — but I wouldn't risk a penny on betting that her heart is even as big as an old hen's that you make soup out of. I really don't see any reason why we should provide her with a sinecure up on the Ettersberg."

The first Sunday or two that the captain found the door locked, he was very much annoyed with Frau Kummerfelden. "An old woman like that," he growled in front of the door, "steals God's days from him — and just when there's some use to be got out of her, she's off!"

So far the captain's love had been easy and comfortable to bear, a smooth and happy love. But now it began to trouble his bones like the gout. "Getting old . . . getting old," he thought to himself; he went to the "Elephant" to refresh his forces, to dull his longing, to drown his discomfort — and yet he did not succeed. An unconquerable restlessness drove him hither and thither. Ten times in the day he marched with majestic steps through the little town, and could have wished it were ten times as big. At last he summoned up courage to pay a visit to the object of his adoration with due formality, but was scornfully repulsed by the lady herself. "Did he think she received visits from gentlemen?" That took him woefully

aback. " When she's got the house full of men boarders! " he said to himself.

His astonishment was so plainly to be read in the old soldier's face that the pretty little woman quite understood it, and said to him in a friendly tone: " My dear Captain, people understand that a poor widow has to make a living; but if I were to let any one that chose come and visit me, I should soon be nicely talked about. So you mustn't mind, Captain." As she said this, she looked very charming, her face tinted by a sweet blush, for as a matter of fact she was not very much pleased to have her admirer standing in front of her door, in the tiny garden, for all the world to see. " But," she said, looking down modestly, " it might be all right for me to take a little walk some day and pay a visit to your daughter . . . "

" To Tubby? " he laughed, surprised. " On a Sunday, then, when Tubby's at home," he said slyly, and made such a bow as he had had no occasion to make in years. Her prudent behavior proved to him that she looked upon him without disfavor, and he was thus in an excellent temper.

That evening Tubby had a good deal of trouble with her father. He got out of the trap with decidedly unsteady steps. Up to that time he had always marched in a very stately manner through the courtyard, unnaturally straight, his moustache standing out stiffly, his hand behind him, like a man who is ready to face anybody's eyes with a " Well, look at me! "

The trouble had always begun after he got into the house; then he had collapsed and given poor Tubby a lot of trouble and distress; he had scolded her crossly and even struck her, and then passed to extravagant praises, staring at her with glassy eyes, until the poor child was terribly frightened.

But this evening he was queerer than ever before. He sat in his armchair, and seemed to be busy with something that was not there. " Go," he said, " or stay, if you like! " And then he began to stroke the cat, which was not there.

"Father," said the girl, "what's the matter with you? What kind of a joke is this? The cat isn't there."

"You goose," said Herr Rauchfuss, "have you got a hole in your eyes big enough for the cat to get through?" He stood up and pretended to be playing with the invisible cat. "There . . . What? You'd bite, would you? That's something new! Like a dog . . . the beast!" His face took on a dull red, and the veins in his temples stood out. He gave a kick. "There — that'll teach her a lesson! Such a brute was never nailed up to a barn door!"

He sat down again as if satisfied, breathing heavily. He looked ill. Now he had grown quite pale, with a bluish tint under the eyes, and his glance was expressionless. The child would have called the housekeeper, but she was afraid to stir from her place, and began to cry bitterly. Herr Rauchfuss broke out again: "There . . . ! It's back again — don't you see it?" he cried angrily. "Open your eyes!" He stared stonily in front of him. "There's no doing anything with a beast like that. Out you go!" And he made as if to thrust it away with his foot.

All at once a tender mood came over him. "Tubby," he said in a weary voice, "you've got to be a good girl . . . What do you suppose it costs me to see to it that you are? To bring up a motherless child is no easy job for an old sinner. Go, child, brew me a grog, a fine one . . . an infernally fine one . . . that'll do me good!"

Such remarkable scenes as this took place now more frequently. In between there were calm days, on which Herr Rauchfuss did not seem to be feeling particularly well. Sometimes he would eat nothing all day, and was out of humor and dull.

On a fine summer afternoon Frau Marianne, the young widow, came wandering up to the Ettersberg through the swelling fields, and asked for Mamsell Beate Rauchfuss, whom she found in the garden. The child was lying asleep on the lawn that was used for bleaching, and did not wake when the stranger approached her.

"Queer," thought the young widow, "to lie and sleep like that! What does the girl do with herself, I wonder, the whole day long?" She looked at the auburn hair that was wound in a great coil around the head, the tender face, the small well-cut nose, the mouth that seemed to be a compound of strength and sorrow, the young body in a short pink dress; a pair of round childish arms; brown hands that attracted the eye. One of them was clenched as if to say, "What I hold, I hold; what I will, I will."

The young widow thought to herself, "The fine estate would be well enough, and the old man too. But the girl . . .!" It was really too bad that a poor woman should have to go to so much trouble in order to have a place to slip into — that one might be good and clever and pretty, and yet all that didn't help. However you took it, it was always a difficult business . . . She thought of her boarders, and of more than one pleasing possibility that had slipped through her fingers.

The young girl woke up, uneasily conscious of a stranger's gaze, and looked at her with astonishment and momentary alarm.

"I have come up to pay you and your father a visit," said Frau Marianne, a little embarrassed, for the unrecognizing, inquiring glance showed her that Beate knew nothing of her. "Your father asked me to come and look you up some day."

"My father . . .?" said Beate slowly and thoughtfully.

"How *is* your father?"

The child answered with a short, hard monosyllable: "Well."

"What a charming, lively gentleman he is!"

The young girl was silent, and looked straight before her with a troubled face. She did not know how to take this dainty, friendly person; the sweet awkwardness of youth lay heavy upon her, she was not used to talking with strangers, and the wonderful deep summer sleep still held her eyelids.

"What a nice place you have here!" said the older woman, hoping at last to find some echo to her friendliness. Beate gave a slight nod. "Is it true that your father eats a rose before breakfast every day in summer, in order to keep so fresh and young?"

"A rose . . .?" The girl seemed to start out of a reverie. "Yes, I think I remember hearing him say that he used to do that. Did he tell *you* so?"

"Yes," said the widow, "and it must be a good system. When one sees him going along with that stately tread of his, one can see that it is."

"Tubby!" cried a powerful voice from the house. "Where are you?" And as Tubby looked up, she saw her father approaching with that identical stately tread. He must indeed have consumed many roses, for he seemed to be transformed — she had never seen him look like that in all her recollection. Could it be true — only today, at table, so lowering and ill-humored and full of disgust for everything . . . and now . . .! The red beard seemed to glow, the eyes sparkled, and he walked on air. Beate opened her eyes wide.

"That's fine, Frau Marianne!" cried Herr Rauchfuss. "You've actually taken this long sunny walk in order to be a little company for my poor girl. I appreciate it, I can tell you!"

The young girl looked anxiously at her father and the guest. What was this new idea of providing company for her? She had long been used to loneliness in her upland home. It was true, she had often wished that the Kirsten girls and their friends whom she met at the sewing-school and now and then at the Sperbers' would come up and see her; but then the thought came . . . suppose they were to see her father as she often saw him — and the desire for company went out.

But Beate's loneliness had been a wonderfully strenuous loneliness. Like a little wild animal she had lived in the shady garden, had slept under the trees or out in the full

sunlight, and dug and planted and run about through field and wood without any one questioning her movements. When it was time to work, she had stoutly lent a hand, at sowing-time or harvest, in stable and dairy, in the orchard and the vegetable-garden. The men and maids all respected her, and said, "Just see how she takes hold of everything, as sensibly as a grown-up person!"

And in winter she scarcely missed companions of her own age and kind; in the big servants' hall there was always something interesting to listen to — things were called by their right names, and a rough world grew up before her mind in which even the ghosts were of a concrete and tangible nature. In the servants' hall the atmosphere was fairly clean as regards jokes and silly stories. Like a child of the people, she soon knew all about love, but without any desire to experience it. There was nothing mysterious and alluring about it for her; it was a thing that had to be, like sowing and reaping, like life and death. For her there was no veil over the phenomena of the world, not even death. All was as it was, and must be accepted.

And so the relation between her father and the guest struck her at once as peculiar. In the servants' hall they had more than once tried to tease her by telling her that her father would some day bring a stepmother home to her. And now she thought, "Is this the one?"

She found the newcomer beautiful: her daintiness, her pleasant smile, her dark, well-arranged locks, all charmed her. In fact, the young woman seemed a wonder to her by the side of her own bashful awkwardness.

It was a lively afternoon up at the old farm-house; not for years had the sound of such bright feminine laughter been heard there.

The housekeeper got up an excellent tea and spread it in the garden under the same tree where Frau Rauchfuss had once watched her child dance, feeling like a departed spirit. She laid a clean white cloth on the table, and brought out some special fresh-baked little cakes. Young

Beate cut some flowers and put a bouquet on the tea-table. Frau Marianne almost drowned herself in the abundance of her own amiability, and the captain was like the ghost of his departed youth.

Beate sat very still and looked on, comparing this one fine summer day with all the summer, winter, spring and autumn days that she remembered. She clenched her firm little hands in an effort to keep back the tears, and stared at her father, from whom so much sorrow had come to her life, and thought of the joyless existence of her mother.

"No," thought the child, "she mustn't come here to us — I should be sorry for her. It doesn't matter about me — I know everything already."

When the pretty widow drove off in the little carriage, the captain kissed her hand tenderly and with assurance. She departed full of triumph; she had him now, the old fellow! And how comfortably the carriage rolled along. It was the same carriage in which Frau Rauchfuss, crouching down against the leather cushions, had come back to her house in mortal sadness.

Frau Marianne was in a haughty mood, and thought lightly of her boarders. When she rolled up to her door — it was getting late — she was thinking, "Herr Leinhose ought to have had his beer some time ago, and Herr Oehmchen his sausage . . . Oh, bother! It'll do them good to be kept waiting for once." They were both sitting in the living-room when she came in, and looked at her somewhat sourly. One of them took out his watch and looked at it, as an indignant creditor looks at his bill. "We're late — we're late!" he said significantly. The little widow answered with a light laugh. The hunger of her boarders seemed not to touch her — these same boarders who used to be so near her heart and whose welfare had been her greatest care; for no bachelor is better looked after than when a little woman who regards him as a possible suitor has charge of his affairs.

For a year and a day both of them had received this care

from the little widow, and both of them were on such terms with her that she believed she had only to choose between them. One was waiting for an increase of salary, which might happen any day; the other had a nice little lawsuit on concerning an inheritance, and might at any moment be master of a few thousand thalers, enough at least to make a good start. They were, in short, both gentlemen of the fairest prospects; and a little widow who thought about marrying again could afford to go out of her way to feed them well and make them comfortable. They were both of the right age, neither too old nor too young.

So they looked up in considerable astonishment at their boarding-mistress, who seemed entirely unmoved by their ill-humor, and was very calmly putting away her hat and cape in the lavender-perfumed chest of drawers. What could have come to her?

They waited and waited. The little widow was positively dawdling over the preparations for supper. And when at last it came, she set it in front of them not with the charming manner to which they were accustomed, but quite indifferently. And the sausage was not as fresh and crisp as usual.

The young woman took her seat by the window and began to spin. This was the time when they had always been accustomed to discuss the program of the meals for the next day. At supper-time they had thus a double peaceful pleasure, by virtue of their imagination and its creative powers. But this also was missing tonight. She spun and smiled dreamily to herself; and the two boarders at their supper had ceased to exist for her. She was keeping house at the fine farm up on the hillside; she was wandering in spirit through stable and kitchen, she was changing the places of the furniture in the sitting-room to suit her taste, and feeling herself at last in her proper place.

Suddenly there resounded at the house-door a loud and peculiar knock. When the little widow reascended the stairs, the boarders heard hesitating footsteps following

her. She came in showing some excitement, and after her came a visitor for whom the boarders were not prepared—a childish, red-haired girl. She wore a shawl over her head, half covering her hair; but it overflowed in ringlets and stray strands.

The soft figure, neither tall nor short, the tender, rosy countenance, the sharply-marked dark eyebrows, all these made the apparition which remained silently at the door so visionary and remarkable that Herr Oehmchen and Herr Leinhose stopped with their mouths full to stare. But the fair apparition did not move, and stared at the two men in helpless confusion.

"Why, Mamsell Rauchfuss," said the little woman with the heart-shaped face, "to what do I owe the pleasure . . . ?"

The strange creature did not answer, but kept on staring. Evidently she was struggling with something that she wanted to say and could not.

"Oh, but won't you sit down, Mamsell?" said Herr Leinhose, pulling up a chair to the table.

"Tell me, for heaven's sake, what has happened!" cried the widow in a faint voice.

Then the strange being sat down on the chair, threw her arms out desperately on the table, buried her face in them, and began to sob. The widow laid a soothing hand on her shoulder. "Oh, don't marry my father!" came out passionately and yet with a tender sound like a breath of spring from between the sobs. "It would be such a pity for you!" The girl now gave free rein to her tears.

"But who is thinking of any such thing?" asked the little widow, much annoyed.

"Yes, you are—you are! And so is my father—I know it! For heaven's sake, don't! You've no idea how wretched it is up there." Her sobs were so wild and unrestrained that it seemed she had been damming them up for years, and now it was like the breaking loose of a torrent in the spring. "I was so afraid that I ran all the way down—I just had to tell you! It would have been a

great sin if I hadn't. If you only knew how sad my poor mother always was, and how sadly — how sadly — she died!"

The poor dear child, meaning so well in her anguish of heart and yet doing the widow such an ill turn, was still resting her head with its glorious crown of hair on her outstretched arms. She did not see how the two boarders were casting amused glances at the widow, or how pale her face was and full of woe at the thought of labor spent in vain and hope dispelled. Solitary in the midst of these three, who all had their own private thoughts, the lovely young creature wept.

"Ah . . . ah . . .!" said Herr Oehmchen at last — "Our beloved Frau Marianne!" His voice sounded rather poisonous. Heaven only knew whether he had ever taken any advantage of the kindness and readiness of his benefactress — but he wished to be the one to choose or to reject, not she. *He* was the injured one. Herr Leinhose's conduct was very similar; he also felt himself a lord of creation, and relieved himself by a grieved and unkind remark or two. The little widow was helpless against the two men so fully armed with injustice.

The picture of the four puppets which Fate had dancing on its thread now underwent a change which completely altered the situation. The eyes of the boarders were no longer directed in anger and injured dignity at the pretty widow, but fell with complacency and sympathy upon the weeping girl, who now found friends at the expense of another, as so often happens — if one loses, another must win.

"Really, can none of us do anything to help Mamsell Rauchfuss to compose herself?" Herr Leinhose shot out of the door, and returned with a glass of cold water. "Here, Mamsell," he said as gently as a child's nurse, "drink a mouthful of this!" Frau Marianne looked up in amazement; such a note in his voice she had never heard! The two men had always been well taken care of, only too well, by her, and they had absolutely no excuse for seeking

revenge upon her for fancied wrongs. But when a man woos, he likes to see the woman in need of help, however much this characteristic alters after he has won her.

"Oh dear!" thought the pretty widow—"There it is!" She could do nothing but look on while both of them offered their services to the young girl. Their voices grew tenderer and tenderer—positively carried away by emotion. The poor lonely girl felt some good from these kind voices; she began to be more composed, and looked up.

The rosy face, slightly swollen from crying, under the crown of red hair, quite visibly inflamed the enthusiasm of the boarders. They simply poured forth kindness and amiability; and Frau Marianne could not be too far behind them for fear of making herself ridiculous; so she was forced to show a certain amount of motherly tenderness toward the disturber of her peace.

Poor thing, she was now learning by experience that love is not to be ensnared by correct deportment and just deserts. So she was obliged to put up with it while her two well-nourished boarders, on whom she had lavished so much conscientious labor, escorted the little brat home in the darkness to the Ettersberg. She was also obliged to endure it when the stupid girl, in her passionate anxiety, threw her arms around her once more, saying, "You would be sad and unhappy—and you're so pretty and nice! Oh, if I could only learn to be like you!"

It was hardly necessary for young Beate to have brought so much disturbance into the house of the unfortunate widow; for Captain Rauchfuss soon after grew very weak and showed signs of breaking up. The evil thing came upon him which attacks so many fine fellows that have drunk freely and stoutly all their days, and condemns them to see the light of life go out slowly amid pains and tortures. Captain Rauchfuss began to live in the midst of wonderful tormenting illusions. He saw things that other people could not see; and since the majority rules on this earth, and exceptions are penalized, Herr Rauchfuss was obliged

to make a journey now and then to Jena, to a physician whose house offered a hospitable retreat for such peculiarly affected gentlemen, until such time as they had provisionally, at least, laid aside certain errors and misconceptions.

The less severe attacks he fought through on the Ettersberg, in his old home; and it was there that his last hour found him.

The Sperbers had come, and old Frau Kummerfelden also, when they heard that Herr Rauchfuss was about to depart. They wanted, in his last hour, to be near the old fellow who had led his life as foolishly and light-heartedly as most people, both for his own sake and for Beate's.

And so they sat in an adjoining room, while Herr Rauchfuss prepared himself amid great sufferings for his long journey; they sat and drank coffee, which the housekeeper was always making fresh, and ate ham sandwiches. That night the doctor stayed up at the Ettersberg and chatted with the three old people.

Tubby watched by her father's bedside through it all, like a brave soldier. It was a hard death, and the child looked into the horrors of life as into a blazing furnace. She herself had so much life and sunshine in her that it was as though Life itself were standing by the deathbed.

"You rascal, you!" cried Herr Rauchfuss angrily. "Just wait a bit—you see how it goes? Soldier's child . . . soldier's child!"

After he had lain awhile in the night very quiet and indifferent, he said in a faint voice, "Let Sperber come." And when his old neighbor entered, he felt for his hand and held on to it as if in terror; but nothing could be done for him. He wanted to speak, and after a hard struggle he got out, "well—born—and dying—very ill—old friend—old friend!"

"Now, now," said Sperber, good-naturedly trying to soothe him, "we all have to come to it—all come to it . . . Oh, my God!" So he held the old sinner's hand, with whom he had played so many games of bézique and had so

many good drinks, while the poor foolish soul in mortal agony fluttered over the threshold of the door that leads from life to death.

The summer after her father's death seemed to bring a wonderful blossoming-time to the young girl. That was a summer! No long rainy spells — now and then a heavy storm bursting over the old Ettersberg; showers in the night, and fresh, dewy, sunny mornings — such a summer, in short, as one might have dreamed of.

The burden of life had fallen from the girl; she fairly bloomed and glowed. "There's one up here that'll turn many a head," said old Sperber. "God only knows what that girl will do before she's through. If she only hadn't that cursed red hair . . . but she runs about like a blazing torch, and everybody that sees her takes after her, down to the very farmboy!"

She lived like a queen up on the hill, although the old Sperbers growled and blamed her for doing what she thought best and staying in her father's house, instead of moving over to theirs and letting the farm out.

Since that evening at the widow's, when the dry voices of the boarders had transformed themselves into the melting tones of tenderness and care, tones that they hardly recognized themselves, she had known that she was beautiful and possessed power over men. That night, when the two men had left her at her own door, the lonely girl had opened her window and gazed out into the huge darkness and silence. Her heart beat as if it would break; her warm blood glowed through her skin. A miracle had happened! Men were drunk with her beauty, drunk with joy of her. She thanked God, and pressed her clasped hands to her bosom, full of amazed happiness. She could not tear herself away from the peaceful stillness that filled her with its own splendor.

The fact that poor Frau Marianne's two boarders were after all but miserable specimens of manhood did not affect

her. She had seen them grow drunk with joy. That filled her with emotion all day long and hallowed her in her own eyes. In this glorious summer, in which the burden of life had fallen from her, she expanded and grew increasingly beautiful through her own happiness. As a child she had envied the flowers for their beauty — and now she knew that she herself was beautiful. She possessed a sure and abiding joy. It was well for her that she was conscious of her beauty. Death she had known, and utter loneliness, and patient endurance. When she was a child, they had called her "little fox" and "red-head;" now she noticed that every man looked after her, that people stood still when she passed. And so again and again this great joy came to her, ran through all her veins and strengthened her.

During this summer she worked valiantly. She wanted to show the old Sperbers that she could be a good housewife and manager. Although the real responsibility lay upon the bailiff and the housekeeper, she would not altogether let go of the helm. She insisted on knowing everything that was to be done and giving her approval.

"The young rascal!" said old Sperber. She was often at their house, getting advice and meeting the young girls and their comrades, whom she had so long thought of and wished to know. Now that she was alone in the world, there was nothing any longer to keep her away from them.

There were two daughters of Councillor Kirsten from the Wünschengasse down in Weimar, who, with their friends Bundang, Ernst von Schiller, and Horny, came up to see the old Sperbers and made real festivities of their visits. The old people loved them very dearly, for they knew how to be merry and pleasant and were full of youthful audacity and exuberance that cheered the hearts of the aged couple.

Beate had never known how to make the good old people smile and laugh in the same way. That hurt her. From her childhood up, there had always been a heavy weight

upon her; she had not known what it was to be quite carefree. To her the two girls, Röse and Marie, were something wonderful. Now that she knew she herself was beautiful, she drew nearer to them as one of their own kind, and they welcomed her joyfully.

The girl of the Ettersberg, who had always been in the habit of taking flight when they met her by chance at the Sperbers', had long attracted them, especially since their three friends seemed to have so high an opinion of her.

"Is it for her mop of red hair that you like her?" the girls asked the young men.

"She has something queenly about her," said Horny. "I watched her once, two years ago last autumn, when she lit a fire in the field after the men and women were gone, all by herself, to roast potatoes. I saw her gathering dry weeds and setting fire to them, and laying the potatoes in the hot embers, and then crouching down looking into the glowing fire, lonely and full of thoughts. I was hidden in the wood, and I had to press my hands over my mouth to keep from crying out, so much her loneliness affected me, and her making the fire all by herself and taking her ease there in the solitude of the woods. Then she ate some of the potatoes, quite simply, like a young animal that had been deserted; and, you may believe me or not as you please, but tears ran down my cheeks. The fields and all around were so big and wide and gray and cool. Her fire, and she herself, seemed to me the only tiny living point in all the gray mist. I knew, too, that she had no mother. Then I saw her go, gravely and silently, along the path toward her home. I shall never forget that picture."

The two girls looked at each other in amazement. When Horny recounted to them the experience about which he had so long been reticent, they were walking up and down in the evening on the Sperber farm.

"Why did he never tell us that before?" asked Röse, but she got no answer. "The Sperbers want us to take

From the Painting by Hans von Bouela

upon her; she had not known what it was to be quite carefree. To her the two girls, Röse and Marie, were something wonderful. Now that she knew she herself was beautiful, she took courage to them as one of their own kind, and they welcomed her joyfully.

The girl of the Rhinelands, who had always been in the habit of being duly valued by everyone at her worth, was [illegible] that her three friends seemed to have so high an opinion of her.

"Is it for her mop of red hair that you like her?" the girls asked the young men.

"She has something queenly about her," said Horny. "I watched her once, two years ago last autumn, when she lit a fire in the field after the men and women were gone, all by herself, to roast potatoes. I saw her gathering [illegible] and drying the potatoes in the hot embers, and then crouching down looking into the glowing fire, lonely and full of thoughts. I was [illegible] and I had to press my hands over my mouth to keep [illegible] and [illegible] and taking her ease there in the solitude of the woods. Then she ate some of the potatoes, quite simply, like a young animal that had been deserted, and, you may believe me or not as you please, but tears ran down my cheeks. The fields and all around were so big and wide and gray and cool. Her fire, and she herself, seemed to me the only tiny living point in all the gray mist. I knew, too, that she had no mother. Then I saw her go, gravely and silently, along the path toward her home. I shall never forget that picture."

The two girls looked at each other in amazement. When [illegible] had so long been reticent, they were walking up and down in the evening on the Sperber farm.

WIFE OF A CLAMDIGGER

From the Painting by Hans von Bartels

[illegible] asked them, but she got no answer. "The Sperbers want us to take

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more notice of her," she continued; "and now it's really possible to do something with her. She's not so shy as she used to be, and one can talk quite sensibly with her. And she dislikes the same things we dislike. What pleases her best is to run about in the fields and work. Oh, but she's got a nice life of it!"

"I don't know," said Marie—"all alone like that!"

"Yes," said Horny again, "she has something about her that makes me think of a queen. She does what she pleases and thinks what she chooses. She lives her own life."

"As if queens did that!" said Röse.

"The kind of queens I mean," answered Horny, "may live in the Wünschengasse or on the Ettersberg."

"Oh, that sort of queens!" laughed Marie.

"That's the only sort that's worth while! They must be young, and pure, and free, and joyous, and look every one straight and proudly in the eye."

Röse and Marie were delighted. "We're three queens!" they called to Ernst von Schiller and Budang. "Come, we'll go and pay a visit to the third."

So they all set off and went by a narrow path through a few fields and meadows, by a sand-pit, to the Rauchfuss farm, and found its young mistress sitting in the garden under the lime-tree, eating her supper. On the white-covered table was a bowl of sour milk from which she ladled some out every little while, and a loaf of fresh bread, and a plate of golden butter shining against the white cloth.

"Oh, how nice," said Röse, "the way she has her supper!" And they were asked to share it, and presently each of them was sitting in front of a bowl of sour milk and cutting bread and spreading butter on it. To themselves they thought, "There, Frau Sperber will be waiting supper for us!" But they saw in their minds the good-natured friendly face of the old woman who, they knew, would not begrudge them their pleasure, and they

said to themselves, "Who knows? When we get back there, perhaps we'll be hungry enough again to eat what she's got for us."

When they had finished their supper, the most natural thing was to begin to dance under the blossom-laden lime-tree. It needed no long discussion to decide on this.

"Off you go!" cried Röse. The couples paired off; singing or humming a tune, they swung round on the firm gravel. Tubby ran into the house when it began to grow dark and brought out a stable-lantern; for under the trees the light had faded when it was still only twilight in the garden. Then came the glow-worms and crawled about among the perfumed branches. The young creatures caught each other's hands and danced in circles under the dark old tree, now to the right, now to the left, without tiring.

They were drawn to each other by the most delightful harmony. The still, peaceful garden around them, the fragrant, sheltering tree and the beaming lantern in whose rays young charms shone resplendent, all made for happiness. They spoke and laughed little. A great, sacred bliss spread through them all. The lonely maiden whom the merry friends had drawn into their circle was flooded with an almost unearthly joy.

That was her first dance, this silent, blissful circling under the trees, first right, then left, as long as their strength held out. It was a dance in praise of God's goodness, of beauty on earth and of the wonder of youth. It seemed they could never really tire of it; and they all knew that they had loved each other from childhood. "Oh, it's lovely!" said Röse.

Herr and Frau Sperber had come over to see what had become of the fugitives, and were standing at a little distance, not wishing to break in upon the sacred dance. Frau Kummerfelden, who now and then spent the week-end in summer with them — for the Sperbers' hospitality was boundless — had come with them.

The three old people stood motionless. "Ah . . . yes!" said good Herr Sperber; and if he had made a long speech on all the joy and all the sorrow of this mysterious earth, it could not have been deeper or more expressive. The old Kummerfelden said to herself, "You dear good Sperber, I should like to shake hands with you for that — you've hit it exactly." And she repeated after him, "Ah . . . yes!" But it went to Frau Sperber's heart, for Frau Kummerfelden had not been a famous tragic actress for nothing.

"Don't make a person's heart heavy, you foolish Suse!" she said to her good friend. "You must always go putting emotion into things."

"But," said Herr Sperber, "it can't go on like this — it would be a nice state of things. Tubby must marry."

"Marry!" said Frau Kummerfelden. "A beauty like her! That would be a shame!"

"Well, what do you intend to do with her?" asked Herr Sperber. "After all, that's what women are meant for."

"Yes, more's the pity."

"And old Rauchfuss's daughter especially ought to marry early — or we shall see things. She's a devil of a girl . . . The pastor says he's got somebody for her."

"Well, why not? The pastor, he'll have somebody decent," said Frau Kummerfelden.

"And what about our nephew?" asked Frau Sperber. "Both the girl and the estate would be just the thing for him; and then we should have him near us."

"Oh, of course," said Frau Kummerfelden; "everything would be beautifully arranged then."

In the meantime the young people were still dancing under the trees, paying no attention to the old folks who have forgotten what real joy is, and with their hateful sensible theories based on experience can't help spoiling pure young human happiness, however well they mean. Without knowing that old eyes full of sorrowful memories and wisdom had rested on them, the happy young things danced on in silent bliss.

When at last they had had enough, they wandered into the darkening wood and sang and looked at the glow-worms, and talked as only very young men and maidens talk who are still afraid to speak of love.

It began to grow late. "I'm thirsty," said Röse, "and now we can't expect to get any supper at the Sperbers'—we'll be lucky if we get in without a scolding."

Beate had an idea: "Let's go into the cow-stable and drink fresh milk." Every one was agreeable. "But we shall have to be very quiet, because the men sleep quite near."

So they stole cautiously into the stable, Beate carrying the lantern. The courtyard lay dark and still; a strong perfume rose from the high manure-piles. The lovely girl opened the old, worn door, and they entered. A warm breath blew into their faces. From a niche in the wall an oil lamp threw down a faint glimmer of yellow on the white back of a cow.

"It'll soon begin to get light—the maid will be coming to milk before long." She threw the light of the lantern into a shelf on which stood all sorts of brightly-scoured bowls and porringers, and took down a snow-white wooden bowl.

From the swallows' nests up among the dark rafters sounded the chirping of the young birds, very sweet in the warm damp air. The little spring plashed in its trough.

Beate took the maid's milking-stool, stroked and patted a fine brown and white cow, and began to milk into the bowl. The girl's bright head stood out against the cow's great side. Horny held the lantern. Presently she had filled the bowl with foaming milk. The cow lowed a little at being disturbed so early and in such a peculiar manner.

"That *is* milk!" said the young mistress proudly. "And now all of you drink." She held out the bowl to them, and they drank long, long draughts.

"A queen she is!" said Horny again to Röse. "How fine all this is! It's great to have such a sea of white,

fragrant milk rising in waves under your eyes and filling you with its warmth and strength."

"You've had as much as you want?" said Beate with blissful pride. They said good-by, reconducting their young hostess to the door of her lonely house.

But the three old folks had taken a very firm resolution to make some sort of settlement up at the Rauchfuss place. Tubby must not be left to herself — it would never do. "A girl like that all alone in the house!" said both the Sperbers very thoughtfully; and so it came about that they invited their nephew to come and see them.

He was a good, wholesome fellow. But all the neighbors in the country round, on the Ettersberg and behind the Ettersberg, in Weimar and the suburbs, thought as did the old Sperbers: It isn't the thing for a slip of a silly girl to be alone on the farm like that. Each thought of a nephew, a brother, a son or some other relative who might be launched on the chase of the rare wild creature — all the while that the young girl was enjoying in fullest measure her freedom and her youth. In spite of them all, she lived very peacefully and properly, knowing how to make herself felt as mistress for all the bailiff and housekeeper were there; all she did was well and diligently done.

But presently there broke loose what the old people in their zeal had wished — a flood of suitors. The lovely youthful peace of the three queens and their good friends was disturbed. Such new, wonderful youth must first become conscious of itself before it can pass on to longings and desires. The three sensible elders would have better let the three queens go on quietly with their delightful dances — first to the right, then to the left, until they were weary. They will never have such dances again — never in their lives.

The first suitors who presented themselves were the two boarders of the pretty little widow with the heart-shaped face, Herr Oehmchen and Herr Leinhose. They paid a

visit to the Sperbers, but not together; neither knew of the other's intention. They did not venture to go directly to the Rauchfuss farm; the thing was to be conducted with utmost propriety.

"Hallo!" thought Herr Sperber. "The thing must be getting serious when such settled gentlemen put themselves in motion." Herr Sperber did not fly too high in his ambitions for his protégée. "A plain fellow like that is the best for a woman of her sort," he thought to himself; "then there won't be any such business as there was with Herr Rauchfuss. Such a chap hasn't anything particular to show off before the world, no red beard, no giant's stature, no whimsies in the brain, no big heart, no wit—just an average fellow that'll settle down and keep quiet."

Herr Sperber received both the gentlemen in a very friendly fashion. The nephew, of course, would cut them out—but that was his affair.

Beate, who was invited one evening to meet the nephew and the other two at her old friends', enjoyed the astonished admiration of the three like a delicious confection—or rather like a sweet perfume that she breathed in. "Men are drunk with me," she thought again, and was proud and happy.

Although the two boarders and the nephew were quite sufficiently wearisome in their enamored state, she was not bored; she was only conscious of herself and of the incense of sacrifice which arose under her nostrils and seemed to invigorate her. The three men were alike indifferent to her; they were only the vessels in which the incense was burnt.

After such an evening she was gay and strong as a young goddess. The next day she was indefatigably at work, imposed even more respect than usual on her people, and felt exceedingly well.

On Saturday evenings the Kirsten girls had a way of strolling up with their friends; but it was not long before first one and then another came with them, whom they had

met on the way and did not know how to shake off. This annoyed Röse and Marie very much. "These people are in the way," they said—"we like to be by ourselves. But Beate Rauchfuss said, "Oh, let them come—it doesn't make any difference."

"Of course they all run after you, because they think there's something to get," said Röse. "You'd better tell them you don't mean to have anything to say to them. What do you want of *them?* You've got *us!*"

The old Sperbers began to be overburdened by the multitude of young people who developed a desire to visit them; and the nephew in particular grew tired of it. So they decided to give Beate Frau Kummerfelden's old friend, the Raven-mother, as a chaperon. She was quite capable of keeping ten suitors in their proper place, and was useful for anything; she could watch the dead and the sick—then why not for once the beauty of a young girl?

She was the widow of the tinsmith Lange; she had married all her children, and so was ready to come to the service of her friends and acquaintances. She was even to be called upon for poetical effusions for special occasions; under the great Saint Christopher's cloak that she wore winter and summer alike beat a feeling heart, and a noble soul dwelt in the big strong body.

She was only too glad to go up to the Ettersberg as Beate's chaperon. It was the beginning of winter when they sent for her. For some time she had been wishing for something of the sort. Up there on the fine farm she would be very comfortable. When the snow lay on the ground, she would not have far to go to find her little pensioners, the ravens, whom she was accustomed to provide with food when the fields were snow-covered.

She came up to the Rauchfuss farm at the beginning of November. "By spring we'll be having a wedding," old Sperber had said to her. "I don't know why this girl, who ought for all reasons to choose a husband nicely and quietly, should be such a burning hay-rick! And the rascal likes it; just as a drinker enjoys his wine, so she enjoys

the lovesighs of all these asses. Ah, there you are — the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation!" Old Sperber looked very black; he was displeased with Herr Rauchfuss's Tubby.

"What foolishness is this?" he said to her. "Down in the town a girl takes what she can get and is thankful — but you make everything that's got legs trudge all this long way up the hill. You know, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. A girl ought to have more discretion."

At this the girl laughed rather haughtily. Her heart was still free, and simply running over with the happiness of earth. No matter what was said to her, she heard only half of it. She seemed to have wrapped herself up in a sort of chrysalis. Her soul was round as a ball, without any angles on which cares could be hung, or cracks into which they could insinuate themselves — a fair ball of crystal, with light shining all about and through it.

It is a wonderful thing, the perfect egoism of early youth, the way it has no ears for the words of reason and wisdom, and only half an ear for anything else. Like a distant noise and bustle sound the world's doings amid the undisturbed content of self-centred youth and beauty.

But quite respectable personages came wandering all the long way up the hill. Herr Oehmchen and Herr Leinhose were indefatigable. With them came not seldom the young widow with the heart-shaped face, in the wise conviction that the dangerous maiden could at worst take only one of her well-nourished boarders from her, and that it would pay her to keep on good terms with both.

Besides these a courtier often came up, a man who had in the neighborhood of Weimar a rather heavily mortgaged estate. But he had also faultless manners, an extraordinarily small head and aristocratic hands. He could look back upon a long line of ancestors, who had all nibbled away something of his property and his personality; there was little of either left, and it was extremely sensible of

him to think of supplementing them. He was superior to all the others when it came to a question of form, and so made a great impression on them. They considered him a dangerous rival, and rejoiced when he was obliged to stay in his town house — for he went to court — when they had anything on like a sleigh-ride or a dance; in fact, they arranged such things if possible on days when they knew he would have to be absent.

Dances, musical evenings, masked balls, sewing-circles were abundant that winter in Weimar, and the pretty Rauchfuss girl was asked to everything — now it was one paying attention to her, now another. She had plenty of cavaliers: all the marriageable merchants' sons of the town, young lawyers — in brief, the wooers recruited themselves from the entire circle of the townspeople, and even beyond it. The hunt was on, and every one joined it who could.

She loved dancing. It seemed to her the most glorious thing in the world to forget herself, to let herself dissolve in music and motion. She distinguished her suitors only by their ability as dancers; as to their intellectual capacity, which indeed was not specially noticeable in any of them, she easily confused them. She herself was without any instinct of the chase or desire for conquest, simply contented and happy in herself.

So the time passed on. The impatience of the aspirants might well have seemed to her like a flood rising to her very lips, threatening and terrifying her, or like a row of insistent creditors, with herself sitting in her little room in peace and letting them knock and call as loud as they would. She did not realize the impatience of the hunters; they seemed all so foreign, so far off to her.

To take one of these strangers into her house, to have him always about, to be obliged to see him every day, seemed a thing so distasteful and impossible that the thought did not even trouble her. But she dreamed of wonders — of one whom she would long to love. She felt something strong, great and good in herself, and realized

at the same time her ignorance and her limitations. Her longing for freedom was also a longing for breadth, a desire to escape from all that was narrow, a will to grow.

Hitherto no one had offered her the bread of life; and she was hungry. Her beauty had in it something sleeping, something strong, that yearned to be active in this world and beyond; but no one offered to nourish this wonderful thing. What they offered her was no royal, soul-strengthening food; it was but ordinary, every-day diet, on which she would pine away and starve.

Yes . . . she dreamed long, amidst all her suitors, of an awakening compared with which the life which these others called into being in her was but a deep, dull sleep.

The Raven-mother took delight in observing that the fortress she was set to guard showed no signs of surrendering; for so the comfortable existence up at the Rauchfuss farm might prolong itself a while longer.

On Sunday afternoons and evenings they had the most of their visitors. Then came the suitors, the Kirsten girls with their friends, the pretty young widow, and often the good Kummerfelden, who took great delight in listening to the irrational chatter of the amorous youths.

"These men-creatures are enough to drive one mad when they're in love," she said once to the Raven-mother. "The bird sings his prettiest songs to his mate and finds the nicest things to tell her; but men, with the exception of a few, who immediately print their pretty phrases, talk miserable rubbish. It positively makes my hair stand on end when I think that they used to do exactly the same in my day, and I didn't take it in ill part. They are only really clever when they're driven into a corner and can't help themselves; it must be a fearful strain on them."

"Yes," said the Raven-mother, "it's as if they thought that a fresh girl like that could only be caught by extraordinary nonsense — to be sure, she laughs at their foolishness; but I tell you she's a cool head all the same."

"And she's right," said Frau Kummerfelden.

But the talk of two old women is a dry affair. In the spring twilight they were sitting by the window in the great living-room; the young people were playing forfeits. In the next room the table was laid for supper.

They had passed a good many merry Sunday afternoons and evenings with the object of all this devotion, harmless, amusing hours, in which the suitors forgot what had brought them there and enjoyed themselves just like other people. But tonight there seemed to be a sort of spring fever in the air. Outside a cold, persistent rain could be heard falling, in spite of the new leaves on the trees. In the chicken-house the fowls were clucking in a Sunday afternoon ennui. The wretched rain had interfered with the usual Sunday occupations of the men and maids. Footsteps dragged across the yard in whose very sound discontent and boredom could be detected. The raindrops beat against the window-panes, or when the wind dropped, came down like a soft gray curtain.

The little town of Weimar, with all its distinguished men, lay hidden in mist and equally bored at the foot of the long slope of the Ettersberg, looking like any other little country town in the rain — comfortless and desolate. In the midst of the loneliness and the spring rain, sounded now and then the note of a thrush, crying for the sun.

The Kirsten girls and their comrades had slipped up in spite of rain and mud, because they hoped that on such a day the amorous youths, the donkeys, as they called them, would stay at home. But the same thought had struck others. Each had hoped not to find the rest and to be able to show off his own personality; and all had been disappointed.

The object of their devotion was in anything but a good mood. A sort of disgust had seized her as all the dripping, commonplace figures divested themselves of their outer garments at the door with much noise and snorting. The stable-girl had to clean off their muddy boots, or, in case

they had brought another pair to change, take the wet ones away to dry them at the stove.

Each one that came in seemed to make a great deal more noise than there was any need of. To the young girl they all seemed like blustering husbands; she too would rather have been alone with the Kirsten girls and their friends. Today all these strange men oppressed her, each of them coming with the hope of remaining at home there, master of all. They seemed positively shameless to her. A heavy sadness came upon her. She thought of her mother's marriage, of the quiet woman's hard-working life, of her loneliness, of the indifference she had to bear, of the warm, sorrowful embraces she had for her child.

"A pretty situation!" The young girl grew full of anger and disgust. "Has one of these men who come here given me anything that I didn't know all about? They are tiresome! If I were to take one of them, he'd soon forget to notice that I was beautiful. What is there left, then?"

They played at forfeits, the restless, discontented thoughts of them all making the very air of the room heavy. At supper, too, it was not so lively as at other times. The hostess was silent, not beaming as usual with the consciousness of her youth and beauty.

For the first time since she awoke to the carefree joy of budding youth, the ball of crystal that was her soul seemed stained and darkened; it no longer swam in the sunlight, shot through and through by the rays.

About nine o'clock, when the rain was coming down in torrents, and it had been proposed that the Kirsten girls should spend the night with Beate, their three comrades and Frau Kummerfelden at the Sperbers', while the suitors would have to accustom themselves gradually to the idea of going out into the wind and wet, there came a loud ring at the gate of the courtyard.

"For heaven's sake!" cried the Raven-mother. The rest sat in silent wonder; their number was complete — who could it be?

"Perhaps it's another one coming over from the Sperbers'," said Röse.

"Heaven forbid!" said Beate. She was thinking, "It will be no life at all if I marry one of these — it would be a hopeless business." And she felt again the strength of her longing, hungry young soul, which yearned to grow and yet no one would give it its food.

She was lost in these thoughts, in her new strange pain, when the stable-girl came in out of breath and said, "I've just let in a strange gentleman, who asks leave to wait a little while till the weather's not so bad. He's come across country, he says."

"Well," said the Raven-mother, "is he a proper sort of a person?"

"Oh yes!" The stable-girl brought her hand down on her thigh in emphatic assurance. "He's certainly a gentleman, even if he is wet through." All laughed loudly. The sudden burst of laughter rose up as unexpectedly as a covey of birds startled by a pedestrian in a quiet stubble-field.

Before it had died away, Beate said to the girl, "Bring him in and do what you can for him."

The Raven-mother also rose, saying, "We'll have a look at him. Didn't he give his name?"

"Engraver Kosch, he said three times — and how he said it!" answered the sturdy girl, grinning. "And he said other things too . . . that he came from White of Egg, he said, and Ashes or . . . I don't know what all else." The girl rubbed her arms and kept on grinning. "I was to tell you that, he said. He was brewed and baked, he said just the same way as the people up here."

The courtier jumped up, crying, "We can't have him in here — he's a lunatic! It's quite impossible, my dear Mamsell Rauchfuss."

Beate smiled. "If he's brewed and baked in the same way as all of us, why not?"

"Because that's foolishness," said the Sperbers' nephew.

"Foolish?" said the much-courted one, laughing. "Are we then from White of Egg?"

"But, my dear Mamsell," said Herr von Mengersen, "these are things . . ."

"And he said more . . . other kinds of things," said the maid, laughing.

"Be quiet!" commanded the courtier.

"No, no," said the girl, "I wasn't going to say anything. "That was just for us."

"Go!" cried the courtier, stretching out his long, soft hands as if to ward off some danger. "Remember that there are young ladies present."

"Leave the room, you stupid creature!" growled the Sperbers' nephew. "Off with you!"

Still grinning, the maid disappeared. Beate laughed. It seemed as if fresh air had come into the room. She drew a long breath. How much merrier and more amusing were the farm men and maids among themselves than her suitors! What sort of things had she herself heard among them? They were not strong on ceremony, and said what they thought.

The Raven-mother came back into the room. "Quite a respectable man," she said with some excitement; "yes, really."

"Is he coming in, then?" cried the Kirsten girls.

And with that he came in, making so low a bow at the door that his long hair fell over his forehead. He stood there modestly — rather poorly dressed, thin, and not specially well cared for. When he raised his head again, he showed a pale, irregular face, looking on the company with sharp gray eyes. His mouth was large and sensible, partly covered by a somewhat bristling, colorless moustache.

He took his place at the table pleasantly enough. He was not a society man, but he seemed to have taken the resolution not to be put out of countenance. His whole person seemed to be permeated by a uniform will. He did not make the impression of having suffered too severely from

the weather; he had simply emerged from the storm, like a pike from the water, in gray, unobtrusive apparel. In contrast to him the others all looked over-dressed, hung about with foreign stuffs and incongruous patches — all except the three queens, whose youth and beauty penetrated their clothes with a powerful and living harmony.

He took a seat by Beate. There was a general silence.

"Mr. Engraver," said the Raven-mother, "please help yourself."

"Mr. Engraver?" said the stranger with a peculiar intonation. "Why not, for example, Mr. Walker, Mr. Eater, Mr. Drinker, or Mr. Sleeper? Or . . . no, that's enough!" He put the question with great calmness.

"Well . . ." said the Raven-mother.

"Yes, of course," said the stranger, "but how do you know that I spend more time, or spend it more pleasantly in scratching on copper than in sleeping or feeding — pardon, eating?"

"Well," said the Raven-mother, "it's customary to call a man according to his most respectable occupation."

"Respectable? I find it, for example, quite respectable to lie on one's stomach on a hot summer day in the field, in front of a mouse-hole and observe the daily occupations of the little gray mistress of the domain. That way one comes nearer to the soul of the world than by engraving what any fool has chosen to smear on canvas. Ah yes . . . our respectable professions!"

"Well, but . . ." said the Raven-mother, considerably disconcerted, looking around at the other faces. She saw a merry twinkle in the eyes of old Frau Kummerfelden. The Kirsten girls looked very roguish, because they had got launched on a good laugh and had not yet been able to give it free course. Their young comrades gazed with interest on the man who had emerged like a pike from the floods. The suitors looked extremely impatient. Beate's eyes were fastened longingly on the stranger, as if he were cutting the bread of life for her. To be sure, it seemed rather

crusty and brittle — but there was something there that had a nourishing flavor.

The stranger's nose had a peculiar shape. It was a nose that seemed somehow rather lonely in the middle of the face with its prominences and depressions. Oh, quite a respectable nose, if one did not make too many claims for beauty on its behalf. It had, as it were, broken away from its companion features; but it seemed somehow to have great affinity and sympathy with the inner being of the stranger. There was something pugnacious about his manner of expressing himself, about his whole bearing and every gesture he made.

"May one ask," began little Madame Kummerfelden, in her charming flowered dress and from under her big cap, "where the gentleman has come from, and where he is purposing to go?"

"I was purposing to pay a visit to your town down there and see your old man."

"The Duke–"

"No."

"His Excellency?" said Frau Kummerfelden in a very polished tone which she enjoyed producing. She knew well how to speak to and of people of rank.

"His Excellency!" said the stranger harshly. "That's the end of it — now you've spoiled the whole thing for me. Now I might just as well turn round and go back the way I came. I come from the Harz country, from one of the many little unknown corners of the earth; and since I'd passed my life among the animals that are called men in those parts, I wanted just once to see the real man who said 'The whole misery of humanity seizes upon me' — and other things like that. I knew it — but now I hear it. 'His Excellency!' Wonderful! And how beautifully you said it, my dear lady. One could see him standing stiffly before one. And I wanted to go in and take him by the hand and say, 'God, I thank Thee that for once Thou hast created something rational, so that people may believe in

Thee with a good conscience — for most of Thine images here on earth — well, I don't want to be disrespectful, but really . . .!' No, what I was wanting doesn't fit in with bows and ante-chambers. He ought to walk perfectly naked, your 'Excellency,' under grand, lofty trees, on the solemn bare ground!"

"You seem, my dear sir," said the courtier in measured tones, "to have a peculiar conception of his Excellency. It is not the easiest thing in the world to get an audience with him."

"And I don't want one!" said the engraver roughly. "To me at home, in my solitude, he is a wonderful friend whom one loves — as only a lonely man can love a wonderful friend. No, no, you may keep your 'Excellency!'"

Ernst von Schiller, the friend of the Kirsten girls, said, modestly, but enthusiastically: "He pervades all the relations of life — he is stronger than all. The son of well-to-do parents, growing up in a large city, becoming a lawyer, then holding office and rank in narrow little Weimar, becoming a courtier, and always in comfortable circumstances — is there a worse road for genius to travel? And yet he has remained clear-sighted, penetrating, deep, full of kindness — he has never grown dull and heavy."

"Ah . . .!" said the engraver passionately. "Who says that? Have you seen him sitting among the poor and miserable? Have you seen him struggling — striving with the powers of life — fighting his way out of darkness? Do you know anything of those mighty forces that press thought out of a man as the winepress squeezes the juice from the grapes? One year without money — one single year without money, without followers — and your 'Excellency' would have become alive as God is alive. There would never have been such a miracle seen on earth. He would have redeemed the world, if he had been inflamed to the very marrow; if he had sat among the wretched, among those who see the world on the side that is in shadow. Ah, to have stood for a little while where they

stand who stretch out their arms to their fellow-beings for help, to have wandered for awhile through cities and villages face to face with winter, without knowing where to find shelter or food, to have known a few good comrades among those on whom respectable people spit . . .! But now . . . I'll put my hand in the fire to show how sure I am . . . I might go to his door and knock, and cry, 'Open, brother! One comes that loves you. He comes from the world that has given you your strength, your insight, your greatness, your wonderful goodness. Open to him, as it says in the Song of Solomon . . .' He wouldn't even say, as it goes on there, 'I have washed my feet — how shall I defile them?' If my luck was good, I shouldn't even be let in to where his Excellency could hear my voice! Well, all right!"

"But, my good sir," said the courtier, "what would become of his Excellency if he undertook to receive everybody who passed through the town? Only think!"

"I am not everybody!" said the engraver, and stared at the table before him as if he were looking upon the most moving sights. Perhaps he saw himself, his innermost being, his past, all the facts and events that he knew and that concerned no one else.

Beate Rauchfuss felt as if some one who belonged to her had come home. She would not have been surprised if the visitor had said to her, "Well, how is it? Have I changed much in all this time? I hope you will understand me as well as you used to." She spoke no word, or as good as none. If she had let herself go, she would have had to pour out her whole heart to him.

This was a man — a live man. She knew it. None of the people of her acquaintance, it seemed to her, had ever been so much alive. They were all lulled into a stupor by habit becoming second nature. Her father? She half suspected that he might have been alive, if he had chosen. But it hadn't suited him to, and he had drunk to stupefy himself. It was no doubt from him that she inherited the

longing to be alive and to live among the living. She could not take her eyes from the keen, alert face, and she felt a stream of life and power flowing to her from him.

But he scarcely noticed her, and went on arguing in his curt, pugnacious way with the suitors, who looked at him as if he were some mad animal.

When the party began to break up, she said to the Raven-mother firmly and audibly, so that they all heard it, "Herr Kosch will stay here. It is too late now for him to go down into Weimar to find an inn. Have the guest-room got ready for him."

These words forced themselves out of her very soul. She seemed to have to lift a ton's weight to speak them. She would not give him up!

And he stayed.

When all had gone, she had a few short moments alone with him in the living-room. He stood with his back to the window and looked about the room. "What will these gentlemen say to your entertaining a chance stranger here? And what do *you* think of it?"

"I? I think that it is too late for you to find lodgings down in Weimar."

"Oh," he said, "I'm not a princess. I'd have crept into any hole that offered me shelter."

She gazed at him in silence, and blushed a rosy red. There was something of merry mockery in the glance that he fixed on her. "Ah . . . women . . . women!" he said lightly.

It was as if something had seized her by the throat and strangled her. "That is a man who has been through a great deal," she thought to herself; and she remembered the men's tales about women that she had heard in the servants' hall. "What does he think of me?" Hot tears rose to her eyes. She took a step forward, and tried to speak, but found no words. "I know . . ." she said, and could get no further.

"What do you know, child? What should a pretty child like you know?"

She grew deadly pale. "Oh, speak to me as you spoke to the young men! Speak to me as if I were a human being!" There was something beseeching in her voice, and something shy and awkward. She went on hurriedly, like one who has much to say and condenses a great deal into a few words, "Give me your hand, and say quite simply, 'It is good of you to want to keep me here.'"

"Queer little thing!" said the stranger as if to himself, with a cool smile. "What?" His eyes took on a bolder expression.

The girl questioned him in deep excitement: "Have you never met a kind, simple woman, or a girl . . .?"

He broke in: "Kind ones there are a-plenty, fair lady."

"No," she said, more calmly now, "I mean a woman who said to you, 'Speak to me as to a human being—tell me what you know and what you think. I need something for my soul to live on!'"

"No," he said, "I have never met one like that. When I have talked to one as to a human being, she always began to yawn."

"Really?" said the girl sadly. "Or is it that it happened two or three times as you say, and then you frightened all the rest?"

"It may be. But it's not a question of much importance."

"Why not?" she asked excitedly.

"Because the most that could come out of it would be a silly love-story, Mamsell—the same old silly story."

"That is sad," said the girl. "God looks into my heart," she went on simply. "Yes, I wanted to keep you here because I felt that you could say some living words to me. I wanted to hear you say them. But now you are not the sort of man I thought . . . Do you think that the men you saw here tonight are cleverer than I am? And do you suppose that a single one of them understood what you were saying? I could see in their faces that they thought you were half crazy. Good night!" she said quietly, turning from him and going through the door.

She grew deadly pale. "Oh, speak to me as you spoke

simply, 'It is good of you to want to keep me here.'"

"Queer little thing!" said the stranger to himself, with a cool smile. "Want!" His eyes took on a colder expression.

The girl questioned him in deep excitement: "Have you never met a kind, simple woman, or a girl . . .?"

He broke in: "Kind ones there are a-plenty, fair lady."

"No," she said, more calmly now, "I mean a woman who said to you, 'Speak to me as to a human being—tell me what you know and what you think. I am suffering for my soul to live on!'"

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yawn."

"Really?" said the girl sadly. "Or is it that it happened two or three times and then you [illegible] ened all the rest?"

"It may be. But it's not a question of much importance."

"Why not?" she asked excitedly.

"Because the most that could come out of it would be a silly love-story, Mamsell—the same old silly story."

From the Painting by K. Reutlinger

"The devil!" he thought. "A clever little bluestocking —and good looking! Well, we'll see . . . Even a few miles from his Excellency wonderful specimens are growing."

When the Raven-mother had conducted him to his room, he came to the conclusion, as he stood by the snow-white bed, that he had not fallen badly. The big farm, the roomy house, the pretty girl whom he had found surrounded by her suitors and her friends — and her love-sickness, that she concealed so amusingly . . . She had struck him as uncommonly beautiful at the first glance, and he had thought, "There she sits, and will no doubt choose of all these polite gentlemen the politest and the richest and the stupidest!" That her choice might fall on him never entered into his dreams; and so he had not considered her worthy of any special notice. He had so far emancipated himself from the tyranny of small circumstances that he was able to lead a life according to his own sweet will. He had learned to restrict himself to the most modest manner of existence, and knew no luxuries except the freedom to think and act as he chose, and from time to time to drink a glass of good wine —he liked that, and thought it beseemed a German. His whole temperament made such a supply of strength from without almost necessary from time to time. His passion to worm himself into the things of this world was so violent that it was naturally followed by spells of exhaustion which had to be relieved. Women played a small, almost comic, and not very exalted part in his life. He looked upon them compassionately as very imperfect, morbid creatures. In his love-affairs he had not been specially fastidious. His mother had been a downtrodden little woman, who had never understood him; his sister full of provincial pettiness. So he had no very high opinion of the sex. Incidentally he considered horses also as particularly stupid animals, and was capable of flying into a temper when a horse-lover tried to prove the contrary. All his views were very deeply rooted in him,

and he could be very irritable when any one questioned them.

"Well, it would be an odd chance if, in this out-of-the-way place that I could hardly see for rain and fog, I should have tumbled into a love-affair!" he said to himself; and with that he laid his head on the pillow. "Too bad that such a pretty creature should have a bee in her bonnet! I wonder how it comes about . . . She looks healthy enough otherwise."

The next thing he knew was a smiling spring morning; the storm had at last spent its rage. The Kirsten girls had gone down very early to the town with their comrades, promising to come up again as soon as possible. Beate had had breakfast with them, and was now strolling about the garden; but she scarcely heeded the young splendor of spring about her. The thought of the guest in the spare room made her heart beat. Yes . . . she ought not to have done it. She ought not to have plucked up courage and said, "Herr Kosch will stay here."

Meantime Herr Kosch was roaming about the courtyard and stables, and finally, coming into the garden, he spied his young hostess. "Well," he said to himself, "suppose we make an exception, and see how long it will be before she begins the yawning game. It'll be worth the trouble, after all."

So it came about that he talked to her as to one of his own kind, as he would have talked with his comrades over the familiar table in the tavern of an evening — although he had never got further with them than to be considered an eccentric, possibly dangerous fellow: on two very different grounds, first because they didn't understand him, and then . . . he went easily for this reason into a passion.

So now he took from his young hostess's heart the weight that he had put there the previous evening by his mocking and contemptuous manner. He let himself go, spoke after his own manner, and gave up the jesting, playful tone which he always had ready for women. She listened to

him with silent attention, no matter what he talked about. The wide leaps his mind took did not seem to weary her in the following. To his astonishment, she did not yawn once. "She must be very much in love," he said to himself.

To her, among other things, he said: "I'm glad you've got your garden so wild and natural — nothing clipped and trimmed, no rectangles, circles, or other geometrical figures, from which one deduces at once that one has to do with men of a very low grade of intelligence. To take delight in squares and circles is a bad sign. Who wants to have intercourse with cave-men? No — you've got a very decent garden that betrays nothing."

"But I know," said Beate, "that people have lived here who got no great pleasure out of life. If my mother had been happier, I believe she would have laid out a few tulip-beds — which might have been round or square, as the notion took her."

"Yes — well," said the engraver, "one must allow people to be happy in their own way. But it's a horrible way. Just think — a poor devil wants to create something in the joy of his heart; and he scratches like a chicken in the earth, longish or oval, until he makes a bed, and is proud and happy. That's the way life is — all a miserable fraud. There's eating — and most people understand how to do that fairly well — but outside of that there's little except scratching up the earth. Have you, for example, ever thought anything, my pretty young lady? I don't mean whether it's going to be fine today, or whether to accept Müller or Meier, or whether the blue dress is more becoming to you than the pink one, or whether there is an eternal life or not. I mean, did a real light ever break upon you about anything, contrary to the opinion of the rest of the world? And did this new light give you such immeasurable joy that you wanted to do a war-dance with cries of triumph?"

"No, Herr Kosch, I have never had such a joy," said the girl.

"You see, Mamsell," he laughed—"and you wanted to talk with me!"

"Is what people *do* nothing in your eyes?" she asked, anxious to know what he thought on this point.

"What people do? What do you mean?"

"I mean if some one takes care of a person and comforts him in his dying hour, or if a mother sacrifices herself to her children."

"No, no," he cried passionately—"all those things are mere details. Thought, thought is what counts! Knowledge is the only thing that makes a man. Then only is he glad and strong—when he's learned how to think for himself. Then only is he alive!"

She was intoxicated with his words, and the tenderest feeling which can spring up in a human heart came to life in her. She, with her so much younger soul, stretched out her hands to his, longing to love it and to care for it. She hardly understood him as yet; but she was full of a mother's feeling for his soul, thinking and studying how to help him. The glances her suitors had cast at him hurt her to remember. They did not understand him; they did not even realize that he was a living man.

It was remarkable, the way she pierced searchingly into his mind, longingly, acutely, gravely and sincerely. He appeared to himself a man with considerable self-respect, a solitary, tried, and well-tempered character. And he thought, "She's a pretty creature. It's too bad—why does she bother her head with thoughts which are of no use to a woman?" He was a little impatient with her.

The habit of solitude had laid its hand heavily upon him; and now he was not conscious how a young, hardly awakened spirit sought, anxiously and full of friendship, to approach his soul. Her senses were still asleep. It was something not of the earth that he was going through without realizing it. If he had understood it, who knows whether the thick skin which had formed on him through renunciation and struggle would have allowed him to feel it?

He could not help realizing that chance had brought him to the most important decision of his life; for he could no longer doubt that he had won complete mastery over the heart of the loving girl. He had never thought of bettering his condition; he had never even wished such a thing, for a life without needs is a happy life, good for body and soul. He loved his freedom; he was exactly what he wanted to be.

And yet fate seemed to intend that he should burden himself with a wife, with duties to others than himself, and with the comforts which he had hitherto neglected. He meant not to defend himself, but to let the thing develop as it would, whatever were the consequences.

On this day he strolled down to Weimar, which had been the goal of his pilgrimage, in order to tread the streets and roads which the old man was accustomed to walk. He went to the theatre, and came back to the Ettersberg and the farm late in the evening. The whole place was asleep; only the Raven-mother came to bring him some supper.

So he wandered about the next day also. Beate was not to be seen. The Raven-mother told him that he was always welcome at meal-times, but was not to put any constraint on himself.

"A sly little creature, that pretty hostess of mine!" he said to himself. In the afternoon he met her, but outside the garden. It struck him that she did not blush, but simply looked pleased. Her whole being had something free and light about it. Her crown of red hair glowed in the afternoon sun; she had the freedom and the happiness of summer.

Herr Kosch could not help feeling that he had contributed but little to this beautiful light-heartedness. After all, he was not well acquainted with the circumstances of these people; and he had had his first sight of the much courted one in the midst of her suitors. The affectionate disposition which she had shown toward him that evening seemed to him no longer so indisputable.

He was decidedly the possessor of what people call luck with women. "They like," he told himself, "what is unusual. A dark fellow like me, firm and energetic, with irregular features, and a bearing a trifle mysterious and suggestive of the werewolf — that's what takes with these romantic creatures. They are proud of such a lover — as a lover; but a husband they choose out of other stuff. He must be reliable — a good, solid member of society." Herr Kosch had had some experience; and he decided to be simply polite.

So they walked along together. The grass was fragrantly springing in all its green abundance from the soil, and waved a perfume in the May breeze soft as silk. The leaves of the beech-trees at the edge of the wood were still folded together like tender green butterflies on the branches. The trees out in the open had their full outlines. The lime-trees were like their own leaves, standing up like great green hearts. All this Herr Kosch pointed out.

"Yes, like hearts," she answered, smiling. "I've often noticed that each tree is like its own leaf. Have you ever heard the tops of the trees whispering to each other. They often make gestures like old women, bowing with discretion and dignity; again, one sees them talking together like children, and other times like serious men."

"You're a child of the country," he said — "a child of the country! Be glad of it."

Now, he thought, she would begin to tell him something of her life, of her parents, of her childhood — that she was tired of the country, or that she loved it. "They all do that; they talk of themselves and their memories as soon as they begin to get a little tamer. They're shut up within themselves, in a narrow circle. Nothing has grown but their selves. A man doesn't speak of his growing-process; he speaks of what he has become, what the world is to get from him. No, these womenfolks are a bore!"

To his astonishment, his dissatisfied astonishment, she was rather silent and did not talk about herself. "I have

been trying to understand," she said after awhile, "how it happens that you are full of thoughts, and all the other people I know and I myself have none."

"Oh," he said, "dear Mamsell, it is simply because you have not loved life warmly enough."

"Not warmly enough — ?" she said thoughtfully.

"Yes," he said, "that's the explanation. You people take everything in such a cool, such a proper way. You never come to the boiling-point, and so there are no thoughts. When you are young, you are just young — without the bliss, the glow, the blessed consuming consciousness. Young people ought to be positively drunk with happy thoughts! If I were a girl and had such a wonderful head of red hair, and limbs of perfect, rounded beauty — by the Lord above! I should run about joyously, in full consciousness of my powers, letting not a single hour of the day be lost. I should taste my youth with all its feelings and thoughts, its sins and its glories. And when old age came on, I should throw myself on the ground and rage and moan and tear my clothes and strew ashes upon my head, and die of grief. But you others, because you don't think and don't know, you are able to live through a dull, proper youth and a comfortable old age. If people knew what a thing youth is, there'd be no holding the world. All that was young would be brewing and fermenting to such a point that no ruler in the world would be able to keep it down."

"Then the world doesn't seem to be made for thinking?" asked the girl seriously.

"No," he answered passionately. "If everybody thought, instead of only one in hundreds of thousands, it would be an impossible place. Just imagine, fair lady, what would happen if women began to think! It's inconceivable. The greatest revolution in history would break out; a volcanic eruption would convulse society. It's quite right — only the few are supposed to think. There must be dead bodies without will, to live mechanically, to do mechanically what they are told. A thinking world — no, thank you! No, Mamsell, we'll stick to the old system."

So they walked along through the splendor of spring, until music sounded in their ears. "Where does it come from?" asked the engraver.

"From Rödchen," said she, absent-mindedly.

"Let us go there. Dance-music . . . I shouldn't mind . . . among the peasant-folk . . . How would it be?"

"These are not peasants," she said. "They're Weimar people who come out to amuse themselves in the woods. I wonder what's going on . . ."

"We'll go and see," he answered. So they went down a narrow path through the thick woods. The music sounded more clearly amidst the May green. And now they stood near the forester's low house, and saw the long gray benches set all about, and people dancing under the trees in the last rays of the sun. Beate greeted the forester's family, and introduced her guest to them.

"Who are all these people?" asked Herr Kosch.

"Oh, nothing but a bowling party."

"Would they allow us to join their dance?"

Herr Kosch led his fair hostess to the board-floored dancing-place under the trees, threw his arm about her, and drew her in among the other couples. He danced in a way that was like his whole nature, passionately, irregularly, and yet with power and skill, and found that his partner fitted him wonderfully. She danced with a perfect comprehension of his way of dancing. This pleased him not a little. Before this, when he had had occasion to dance, he had been much annoyed by finding in the dance the same conflict as in life, resistance instead of adaptation. But this time he found a singular pleasure in it, as it were an assertion of himself. Like a good strong wine the delight ran through his body. He felt himself free and unfettered as he seldom did — himself, without a struggle.

Now his partner was out of breath, though he was far from exhausted. She tottered, and there was something unrhythmic in her movements that disturbed him. Exhausted, she drew him out of the crowd of dancers, and sank faintly almost into the arms of a short, stout gentleman.

He laughed good-naturedly. "Yes, my pretty child, I've been looking on for some time — but why must girls dance at such a tremendous rate?" The engraver saw his partner grow more and more confused — more than he would have thought a chance contact should have accounted for. "Oh, pardon!" he heard her say. "Pardon, your Royal Highness, for my awkwardness!"

"Oh, then it's Karl August that she almost bumped into!" thought Herr Kosch. To be sure, there by the house stood the hunting-coach which he had seen in pictures. His eyes eagerly sought further. Quite near him he caught sight of a dignified old gentleman in a dark-gray coat, a snowy white neckerchief about his throat in which a reddish-yellow stone glowed, his hat in his hand, his hair like a well-arranged gray mist above his lofty forehead, which rose in lines pure as the dome of a temple — and those eyes! He had danced himself up to the very goal of his pilgrimage.

But he did not go up to this man and say, "Brother!" He just stood and stared. "God in heaven, what a man!" he murmured to himself. "He has built up his manhood like a throne. He stands alone among them all — they are simply wiped out by his presence."

The engraver saw his friend, for whom he had so longed in his lonely hours, standing now at an immense distance from him. "Yes — a man must build such a wall about him if he means to create and express himself as *he* has. No — he has nothing to do or to seek among the wretched. What a plebeian I am that I couldn't understand this!"

Then he saw the prince take Beate Rauchfuss, whose beauty dazzled Kosch at this moment, so great and strong was it, and lead her with a smile to the distinguished old man, saying, "This is the red-haired beauty from the Rauchfuss farm, who crossed our path so often as a wild youngster when we used to make excursions up to the Ettersberg. Our hills produce such wonders."

The girl bowed before the dignified old man and kissed his hand respectfully. He patted her auburn hair softly.

"Happy man for whom this sunny head shall shine! Joy and love beam in her eyes." He turned to his princely friend. "What an ocean of beneficent happiness lies in the young creatures of the earth!"

"If it only didn't dribble away in such cursed little drops!" growled the prince, raising his blunt nose and beckoning to the coach to draw near.

"Ah, but from another point of view that means watering the earth! Have no care, pretty child — whichever way it comes!"

The grave, distinguished man followed his prince into the coach, and both waved a farewell to the pretty girl, who made the deep curtesy she had learned so thoroughly from Frau Kummerfelden. Every girl in Weimar who had ever been to the old actress's sewing-classes understood how to make a proper court reverence; "for," said the good woman, "in a little town like this, where there are so many princes both of the blood and of the intellect, a certain *savoir vivre* should prevail, even in the streets." In things of this kind she was a past mistress.

The engraver had stood as if under a spell; his meeting with his "brother," the old master, had come and gone. But he had played no part in it. He looked at his rough, sinewy hands. "Those are hands for you!" he cried in his heart. "To gain nothing but a halfway-decent suit of clothes, four shirts, two pairs of shoes, and a miserable hole to live in, they have become as rough and lined as if they had conquered a world. *He* has conquered a world — and his hands, at his age, have remained soft, moved by the soul. Ah, plebeian, you won't go and knock at his window! But the girl whom he caressed with his eyes and passed his hand over her hair — this little goose — !" He grasped angrily at Beate's hand. "Let us go, Mamsell," he cried — "let us go!"

And amidst all the still May greenness, under the shelter of the tender shrubs, he caught the startled girl to him,

kissed her and buried his face in the glory of her hair, which his "brother" had stroked and the perfume of whose young life intoxicated him. "Into thy hands, O Lord . . .!" he almost sobbed.

She had fallen suddenly into such a storm of hot caresses that her breath failed her as if a hailstorm were beating down on her. She pushed him away, and at the same time nestled closer to him.

"Do you love me, then? Do you love me?" she asked him, trembling and shaken.

"Do I love you? For heaven's sake, would not any one love anything so young and wonderful when he sees it and feels it? What do you think? Skin and hair with the scent of May in them!"

She freed herself from his arms and walked silently by his side for a little way. "Do you love me?" she asked again, as shaken and distraught as he was. "Do you know me? Do you know what I want in life?"

"You want me!" he said passionately.

She wanted to speak, she tried — tried — tried, but her excitement was too great. "Do you wish to be my friend?" she said at last, anxiously.

"Yes — of course I do!" he answered.

"Will you teach me how to think? I want to be as much alive as you are."

"Silly child!" He would have taken her in his arms again; but she kept him off with passionate refusal.

"I love you because you are different from the others, and so that you may speak to me as to a friend, as to a human being."

"And don't I, then?"

"I don't want to live my life asleep all the time, do you hear?"

"What a strange little woman-thing you are! There's a time for kissing, and a time for everything, you babe!"

"Life is what I long for!" she cried, trembling with the uncertainty of what it was she wanted.

"Life? Love *is* life!"

"No, no! To understand—that is life. If I join my life to yours, I want to be alive, and not dead and dumb as my mother was."

"You have queer notions. Do you suppose, then, that people can learn how to think as they learn any other trade? I tell you, what you've got to do is to love life—I'll make it my business to see that you love it!"

"I shouldn't like to be cast off," she said with a kind of bitterness, "when you thought I was no longer beautiful. I should run away from you if you deceived me and were no longer my friend."

"All right," he said, laughing. So they walked along close together, and he kept his arm tightly about her waist. "Bound," he said, "you will walk more freely and happily than unbound. Everything is not what it seems to be. You catch sight of a thought or a feeling, and you imagine it is as simple and as limited as a point. You come closer to it, and you find it grows, it turns into a garden with all sorts of walks and labyrinths. You walk about in it and are astonished. Then under your very feet it changes to a wilderness full of precipices and impenetrable thickets. The wilderness grows to a world, which you can never see the whole of and never come to the end of. All things are included in this world, all things and everything.

"It is very much less trouble to take things as simply and smoothly as most people do than to try to move huge blocks of thought. Thinking is like drinking—a man easily falls into it, if the shoe pinches anywhere. And what does he get out of it? An endless struggle with headaches. He's got to be a hero to keep it up. Do you think you'd ever get used to drinking?"

"I don't think so," laughed the girl.

"Just as soon as you would to thinking. These headaches are much more serious for a woman. To endure them one must be free—free as a man is without chick or child, without a little ache or pain; he must be able to sink

himself in his great trouble." She looked at him in questioning astonishment. "You see," he went on, "you're a little tender spring world, and you want to go rolling after a burnt-out, petrified, stiff and stony winter world. 'Deuce take it!' people will say, 'What do they want with each other?' The sweet spring world will be burned up or crushed to pieces — it's plainly to be seen."

"Then let it be!" answered the girl firmly and quietly. "We are all burning up anyhow . . ." And he was conscious again of the May-perfume of the spring world which intoxicated his unaccustomed senses.

She was too full of beauty for him, too ready with her devotion, too tender of soul and too longing of heart. Something less generous would have done better for him. Excess always oppressed and troubled him. His ascetic chamber rose before his eyes: his bed covered with a woolen counterpane and a few rags, a regular wolf's lair — his work-table, the whole room with its clouded windows; and he thought of the distress that came upon him when he knew there were a few gold pieces in his box and felt himself turned, as long as they weighed him down, into a commonplace citizen.

To win a scanty reward with great pains had become a necessity of his life. The comfortable existence which seemed to be approaching troubled him. What would he do with it, and it with him? He recognized only a few duties to himself, and they were more than enough. Now a little spring world came rolling up to him and revolving around him in its fragrant orbit. He would have to adapt himself to it — and that would be no simple matter.

Deeply moved, both of them, they reached the Rauchfuss farm, and found all sorts of guests awaiting them. The Kirsten girls and their friends, Frau Marianne's boarders and the little widow herself, and some of the bachelors were there.

To all of these the guest who had dropped from the clouds

seemed a doubtful addition. They had come up to have a look round, and they found Beate joyous and rosy. She greeted them all more warmly than had been her wont. Each felt himself specially made welcome.

The new guest stood there, thin and angular in his gray suit in which he had emerged as a pike from the water, and looked none too well pleased at the coming and going, at the chatter and the laughter.

"The fellow hasn't accomplished anything here — that skeleton!" said one of the boarders. He himself showed the good results of Frau Marianne's care. Her idea was to keep one of the two always well taken care of for herself — that was her fixed policy, because in any case she wanted to have one of the two to console her.

The Raven-mother was grumbling because this evening she had all the labor of preparing supper; but the table under the trees was spread, and old Sperber, who came to see how they were getting on, announced that he would provide a punch.

The Kirsten girls and their friends brought the wine from the Sperber farm and worked reverently and busily at the brewing of the punch. When it mingled its fragrance with the perfume of the young foliage and the blooming lilacs, the mood of the assemblage was a festive one. The girls began to sip and to laugh, the young men became more lively, old Sperber nursed his glass lovingly with both hands, as if to caress the soft golden liquor. The engraver drank not in a festive manner, but in the measured yet not ungenerous fashion to which he was used at his inn among his accustomed companions. It was not such an extraordinary occasion to him as it was to the rather sober-minded guests here. They were frugal people; the Sperbers and the Weimar folks were in the habit of drinking of an evening the honest home-brewed stuff that was brought in open pails from the town hall and then bottled.

The engraver held his glass in his hand and gazed into it. "On my way to this Promised Land of yours," he said,

" I sat in a village tavern and drank the wretched beer they gave me. In came a miserable old woman, worn with age and sorrow, and touched me on the shoulder, saying, ' Give me a sup, for Christ's sake! ' ' Here, old girl! ' I said, and gave her my glass. She sat down and drained it to the last drop; then she looked up at me with her big old eyes and said, ' Now I have drunk your cup of sorrow! ' "

The engraver was silent; the others stared at him. " My hat comes off to that word! " he said, and seemed to sink into himself. " That was the greatest word of love that I ever heard in my life. Amen." The young folks burst out laughing; old Sperber still caressed his glass, and looked half-mockingly at the stranger. But he went on: "All the church-bells ought to have been rung when the old woman said, 'Now I have drunk your cup of sorrow!' People should have rushed out of their houses to see what was happening — they should have cried, ' Hosanna! ' Does no one understand the immeasurable depth of such poverty and goodness? I fell on my knees before the old woman, I kissed the tattered hem of her garments — and she . . . spat in my face! Amen. And the meaning of it all is — that no one knows what he says and does in this world, neither in the highest sense nor in the lowest. They utter oracles like the gods, and understand nothing of them. They are angry with each other, and know not why. A world of dreams . . . Here's to your good health! " And he raised his glass and drank.

"A positive fool! " whispered old Sperber to his neighbor. " Why can't he talk like other people? " And the same sentiment might have been read in the glances of the rest.

This brought all her blood to the hostess's cheeks. A warm, protecting love for him seized upon her; a kind, inextinguishable flame sprang up in her heart. It seemed to her as if she could dip her young soul in his and bring it up again full of the power of life and of riches. He was a revelation to her. She felt that she was escaping from a dark, dumb world to him and to the light.

It was not long before the suitors became aware that the strange engraver was on the road to snatching from under their very noses the rich and beautiful prize to which they aspired. Even to Herr Sperber the situation seemed to be getting queer; and Herr Kosch had a hard time of it. The men made him a target for their remarks, and tried to set him in an absurd light. He held his own bravely, and gave valiant answers back. The rough give-and-take of the tavern had accustomed him to that, and at first he defended himself with equanimity — but you must remember that he was the man who could not suffer it to be said, in opposition to his views, that horses were intelligent animals. So he poured upon his wrath no small quantity of the excellent punch, although he knew it was a dangerous policy.

"What was that you said just now, Herr Kosch, if I may inquire?" said the courtier with mocking politeness. "What was that expression you used? 'All those old barnyard cocks that were clustered around his Excellency?' Do I quote the expression correctly?"

"You do," said the engraver harshly. "Scratching in the earth around him to see what they can pick up — in a disgusting way, so I imagine. Barnyard cocks — and barnyard hens!"

"Oh," said the courtier bitingly, "you have a singular conception of our society here!"

"Society!" said the stranger scornfully. "Two-legged creatures like those that run about everywhere, a crowing, clucking crowd! And then one of them crows himself up in the big barnyard to the position of a demigod! Lord, how the fellow must be bored with the rest of the tribe!"

"And how do you feel, Mr. Barnyard Cock?" asked Sperber's nephew, raising his glass. "Here's to you!"

"To you!" said Herr Kosch, bowing very low toward him and trying to fix a somewhat unsteady gaze upon him. It seemed that in this firmly organized body of his the eyes were not altogether obedient. "Barnyard cock? Barn-

yard cock? Sir, I come from shimmering depths, from the caverns under the earth. You think the earth ends there where you walk? You think there is nothing moving under your feet. But the mole and the rabbit burrow deep — very deep. Well, well, I'm not a barnyard . . . barnyard cock — that I'm not . . . certainly not." And he shook his hard, lined hand. "No . . . no!"

"The fellow's drunk," muttered Herr Sperber. He no longer held caressingly encircled the clear liquor in his glass, but looked at his old friend's daughter, and saw how, pale and with big, wide-open eyes, she watched anxiously every movement of the stranger. Old Sperber rose, came quietly behind her chair, touched her on the shoulder, and said, "I'll soon get rid of the fool for you — don't worry, Tubby." In reply he got from her a glance full of rebellion, and yet uncertain, as if seeking for help. "Listen, child, come with me through the garden," he said, cheerfully and heartily. She shook her head, and her eyes fastened again on the engraver.

"A man," the latter was just saying to his neighbor, Sperber's nephew, "in whom one notices by his walk or his bearing or his speech, even to the slightest degree, that he has taken too much of a good thing — is a degenerate! In man there is a whole world at war. The microcosm is in revolution! Storms are raging in the brain — the world is on fire! He stands unmoved, a god in revolt! What is your opinion? That is the highest self-conquest, the primeval type of manhood, the struggle and victory without a parallel!"

"Well, drinking too deep can happen to a fellow . . . I don't say no," said the nephew very quietly. "But your way of putting it strikes me as very grand."

"Oho . . .!" The engraver stretched himself, disengaged himself, so to speak, from his own ego, and looked challengingly down the table. His eye fell upon the beautiful girl who had given him her heart. He was aware of her deadly pallor, of her eyes fixed desperately upon

him. "God help me — that sweet soul!" he said within himself. "There isn't half an ounce of strength and sap in a woman like that. Wash me, but don't make me wet! She wants a man with spirit, but she can't bear to see the bottling. Ah, there . . .!" He pulled himself together and remained quite silent.

The young hostess rose now, and with her the guests. The last half hour at the rustic table under the trees, the air had been a little heavy. Many an eye had seemed to see old Rauchfuss go by and stop to shake the engraver's hand mysteriously, as though to say that he spoke after his own heart, and much more forcibly than he had ever been able to do.

The engraver now approached his hostess and said in a rather thick voice, "To judge the living and the dead. In heaven's name, then, good night. Tomorrow I go." She looked at him with eyes full of the deadliest anxiety, but spoke not a word, holding him only with her eyes. He was silent and gazed straight in front of him. It was evident that he was making a great struggle, internally and externally, to control himself. "I am who I am," he said. "There is no interpretation to that. What has grown so," and he held out his sinewy hands before him, "has grown so. Farewell . . . But oh, your kisses — your royal kisses! God keep you!"

"Stay," she said, "stay!" But her features grew even paler, she tottered, and her head sank against the tree-trunk. Herr Kosch caught her in his arms. The candles on the table in their glass shades threw a yellow light on them.

Herr Sperber and some of the others saw the girl resting in the stranger's arms.

"Good Lord!" As quickly as his short legs permitted, Sperber reached the spot. "What's the matter?" he cried. "What's the matter?"

"My fiancée seems a little unwell," said Herr Kosch gravely.

"Your — what?" cried Herr Sperber. "But that's — that's — " He was going to say "horrible," but thought better of it, and only looked at him in a way that left no doubt, taking the girl without ceremony in his strong arms.

Then she opened her eyes, and said, as she saw the friendly, horrified face of old Sperber bending over her, "I love him beyond anything on earth."

The engraver seized both her hands and kissed them. "Go," she said; "I want to be alone. You promised to be my friend. I long to be alive as you are alive. That is what you must understand. Good night!"

He kissed her hand again, and bowed to Herr Sperber. "I will go," he said, and he went, just as Herr Rauchfuss used to walk when he wanted to show the world that he was completely master of himself.

The girl remained behind, dissolved in burning tears. Herr Sperber led her to the deserted table and made her sit down by his side. A bitter odor came up from the dregs in the bottom of the glasses. The two candles made a small white island in the midst of the darkness, in which dim forms were seen walking up and down in excited converse. Still the tears ran incessantly down the girl's cheeks.

"Child," said Herr Sperber, "what have you done? An utterly unknown man! Are you womenfolks all crazy? For a whole year everything respectable that had two legs has been running up here after you — and you . . . A man like our nephew . . . Think, child — so straight and steady, pure and good; he would make a woman happy."

"Don't — don't!" she said.

They sat silently side by side.

"No one need know. Come, child, let us go to the others." Helplessly she followed him, and took leave of her guests. The suitors went away in deep, dumb amazement. The Kirsten girls kissed their friend heartily on the cheeks, and their comrades pressed her hand.

"For God's sake, child," said the Raven-mother, when the last had departed, "are you clean out of your senses?"

"Let her alone," said Herr Sperber. "We don't need anything. Go to bed. I'll stay with our child. Leave us alone."

And they were left alone. They went together into the living-room, Herr Sperber carrying one of the large candles with him. "Now tell me, child, how all this has happened!" She knelt in front of the little old man, who sat, full of care, in Herr Rauchfuss's armchair; and again the hot tears flowed. "Do you remember the night when your father lay dying, and we sat here and waited for him to draw his last breath — eh, child?" The girl nodded. "Do you know that Herr Kosch shows a decided inclination to take to drinking?" She nodded again, her eyes staring straight before her, full of pain. "And in spite of that . . .? Tell me, is it absolutely necessary for a woman to be entirely without reason? Do you think you could stop him if he made up his mind to be a drunkard!"

"No," she said.

"Then what did you mean, my girl, by what you said just now? You want to be alive as he is alive? And you want him to be your friend? What did it mean? Look, I'll set the thing all straight for you. You must know your mother was just such another overstrained little soul, good and dear as she was. Look at my old woman, look at the old Kummerfelden. All women of the better sort have had their little whimsies when they were young. But you see, women learn to think in another fashion from men. Men come to it sooner — people teach them the trick. You see, I'm telling you the thing just as I see it . . . They go to school longer; they learn their trade; they've got to play a part in the world. Of course a good deal of it is put upon them artificially — it doesn't always come to them naturally; but it's got to come. One generation tells the next what it has thought. Like an irresistible avalanche the whole heap of thoughts, whatever has been thought, comes down on us men. Or, if you'll understand me better, we get all our food ready chewed up for us.

"Now women learn to think in quite a different way. When they're very young, life leaves them quiet, doesn't put too much of a strain on them. But when the time comes, life itself teaches them to think. The avalanche of thoughts doesn't come down on them, nor do they get their food ready chewed. Out of their own nature grow the thoughts, and understanding of life. Look at my old woman and the Kummerfelden. I take my hat off to those two good old souls! They think simply about everything; but what they think is nothing foreign, nothing learned — it is their own, their hard-won property. We men are seldom so natural, so penetrated by our convictions, so simple. We have much in us that is foreign — or dead. I'm not talking so much of myself — I'm a simple old fellow. But for all that, you know, old Sperber isn't a fool. Do you think he doesn't understand you? Ah . . .

"When a man is in love with you, he's everything but your friend. He can only be your friend when the stage of being in love has passed; and even then he may not be your friend. That's a thing you've got to deserve! That is life's highest gift, and it doesn't fall into everybody's lap. Yes — perhaps you can't even deserve it; it's got to come to you like the big prize in the lottery.

"And so we come to it: we are too simple for you — you want to go up higher. You don't want to grow as we have grown, I fancy, to develop quietly like my old woman. You want to spring up suddenly to the heights. The air that comes up from Weimar has poisoned you — that fine spiritual air. But you see there's nothing for you in that. Wait, wait, wait! What the good God has chosen that we should know here below, we shall know when the time comes; mother Nature looks out for that. There's no need of a forcing-house for such plants.

"Look — there's still time. Tomorrow morning early I'll go to your engraver and say to him: 'My dear fellow, you probably know by this time what girls are . . . An old man has been talking to her, and she has changed her mind.' It would be ruination for both of you."

"Let me go my way, Uncle Sperber," she said—"let me go my way. I can't live without him!"

"Tubby, that's exactly the way your mother talked. I don't take any stock in a love like that—none of God's creatures is worth it. Not one. My old woman and I began gently and quietly, and we've always gone along the same way. It seems to me one doesn't want a harbor where the waves run so high that the ship can't rest in it. Listen, my girl . . . were you intending to copy him in all his nonsense? I don't know . . . I should be telling a lie if I said it would please me specially!"

"No," she said, "I believe you, Uncle Sperber; I suppose it couldn't please you. Every one speaks only to his own kind, and the rest don't understand him. My man is understood here by nobody—if he spoke with the tongue of an angel, it would be just the same. But I . . .! My heart went out to him instantly; from the very first moment I felt that I knew him like an old friend."

"Tubby," said the old man with a sigh, "I don't have to tell you what you'd be exposed to with him. God gave you your father for a warning. What you are doing is against God's will. Your hot tears bear witness against you."

"Uncle Sperber," she said gravely, "that is just the reason why words are unnecessary. My tears must say to you, 'I know everything, I understand everything, and yet I cannot let him go.'"

"Then God be with you, my child! If it is so that you know what you are doing, then go the way that you are destined to go. I see nothing good before you. Exactly so I spoke to your mother—the very same words. She married the man she loved for no other reason, as it seems to me now, than that you should come to be what you are at this moment. You wanted to come to life. And now . . . others are wanting to come to life, and seem, worse luck, to need you and this chance stranger.

"Child, if love only lasted! A marriage for love like

that is a serious thing for anybody. If it were only for a short time, it wouldn't be so bad. But to choose a partner for life in the glare of a Bengal light! It would be the same for me to buy my cows by Bengal light, or when I was drunk. If you'd only listen to me! Let him go, Tubby, let him go, I've said; take our nephew. I can't do better by you."

Then the girl raised herself to her full height: "That's enough, Uncle Sperber," she said with shining eyes, as she gave him her hand. "You are very good to me! But if in the morning he still wants me, I stand by it. I am so full of force and courage and joy because he loves me. I am strong anyhow — I will work out whatever fate lays upon me. I know that every happiness must be paid for in suffering."

"Well," said old Sperber, "if you go to your folly with courage and joy, it's one thing — but with burning tears . . .? Am I not right, my girl? If you have courage, you may get the best of this devil of a fellow — but going to it in sorrow . . . no!"

And so they came together, as thousands and thousands of others have done, driven by love, in the face of all reason. The history of their marriage was the history of many another that reaches from youth to old age. They made each other happy and disappointed each other, they did good and evil to each other, they bored each other and grew accustomed to each other. As with all mortals, there were long stretches of life over which dulness lay like a covering of thickly-matted seaweed. Under this covering the waves of life could hardly move, could not break through to the light of day; only a mighty wave of joy or sorrow could break through it and send its spray up toward the heavens.

And now Beate Rauchfuss, as an old woman, sat at the end of an afternoon in her garden on the Ettersberg. All was over that she had once known — joys, longings, hopes,

desires, and powers; and Herr Kosch was gone too. She, that loved most deeply, had the most to bear — for she bore him the rest of his life. His sufferings were her sufferings, the movements of his life also the movements of hers. So she led woman's burdensome double existence — the burdensome manifold existence which is woman's.

With her children she shared the bliss of youth and the sorrows of youth, felt with them their disappointments and their joys. With two of her dear ones she had looked into the face of death; she had climbed Herr Kosch's steep path with him, without his calling her to follow. She had stolen out after him, learned to keep step with him as an unnoticed companion of the way. And when he, weary of wandering, found his faithful helper and comrade by his side, she had reached the goal of her life.

Yes, women learn to think in a different way from men. She came to understand her old friend's saying. As she gave birth to children, so she gave birth to thoughts. Each was a hard-won conquest from the heart of things, not found by chance, not learned, not strange and separate — but born alive of herself and paid for with suffering.

When she sat, an old woman, in the rays of the setting sun, full of peace, her soul was round as it had been in her first youth, with no projections, no fissures, on which cares could hang themselves or into which they could creep. Like a distant noise and bustle sounded the world's business in the undisturbed peace. For the second time in her life, her soul was like a sunlit ball of crystal; it had been so in her youth, when no stain or shadow had yet fallen upon it from life, and now, when all the stains and shadows were purged away from it.

Whether life was easy or hard, marriage happy or unhappy, work successful or unsuccessful, it was all one — a matter of indifference. Only one thing was not a matter of indifference: that the old woman sat here now in the evening sunshine with a soul that was rounded and transparent, floating in space like a clear shining sphere, dreaming peacefully and asking nothing — done with the world.

CLARA VIEBIG

BURNING LOVE (1902)

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THERE were fires in the village. It was always at night that they broke out, now here, now there; and this had been going on for eight weeks. The corn in the fields had just come to the full ear when on a dark evening the first blaze was discovered. Since that time the fearful guest had visited no less than ten cottages.

The damage had indeed been slight. One peasant had the reeds and thatch of his low-hanging roof a little singed. In another house the side of bacon left from last winter's pig and still hanging from the beam under the roof had been made to sizzle a bit. At a third, the brushwood that children had gathered and piled up along the wall had crackled and snapped, until the wife, wakened by her infant's cries, thought some one out there was stealing her kindling. At a fourth, the frightened lowing of the cow revealed a smouldering in the hay-loft. At the fifth, the flame did not even get started; for a downpour of rain had beaten upon the attic and quenched whatever of fire was lurking in the timbers. In every case the protection of all the saints had been plain to see.

Nevertheless, a secret horror began to worry the minds of the villagers.

"I warrant," said a wiseacre, contracting the brown leather of his brow in suspicious wrinkles, "some scalawag is doing this!"

Yes, it could not be otherwise: there was somebody setting fires! The children could not be the guilty ones — they were led by hand or carried in the dosser out into the fields; or, if it happened that they were left behind, their mother did not fail to hide the matches on the topmost shelf beyond their reach. But had not Annie Marie, watching alone by the cradle of her sick child one evening when all the others were still working in the fields, seen a fellow in disguise peering in at her window? And had not Brewer's Hubert, coming home late at night, caught sight of a dark shadowy figure that slipped by him and escaped in the hedgerow between the gardens?

There could no longer be any doubt: there was an incendiary. But where? Who was the miscreant? Some man in the village? Impossible! In the village each man knows the other far too well, learns too well from his daily toil how hard it is to scrape together his little livelihood, for him out of sheer wantonness to afflict his neighbor. No, it must be somebody from a distance; somebody, perhaps, who had been a-roving in the world. To be sure, journeymen, beggars who — how can one tell? — already have one foot in the lock-up, did not pass through the village, which is situated apart from others on the Eifel plateau, with its two straight, compact rows of houses in the protecting shade of a dark grove of fir-trees, but with its remote fields, reclaimed from the waste land, exposed to all the winds of the Eifel and all the rays of the burning sun.

The little village quivered with excitement. And mingled with the anxiety there was curiosity, and along with the curiosity fury. If they could catch the culprit, they would hurl him from the roadside down into the brook with such violence that he should never stand on his feet again! Or they would climb the mountain that rears its scrubby head behind the village and there hang him on the wind-swayed hazel-tree — after having soundly thrashed him with its switches! Then the cows and swine which the village herds-

CLARA VIEBIG

man pastured on the close-cropped field would have a sight to see, and the herdsman, Will Stoker, too!

And as they thought of William they suddenly held their breath. Had he not for years been a fire-tender down in the Rhineland? He was the only man in the village who, after serving his time in the army, had not returned home to till the soil in the sweat of his brow, but had remained down there, where the world puts forth its temptation and the saints are only to be found in the cathedrals, not to be met upon the highways. It was said that people had to toil in the factories — very likely, but certainly not by far so hard as up here, where often in May the frost killed the budding grain and potatoes froze as early as September. Will Stoker had had nothing further to do down there than poke fires. He had been fireman, night fireman in the factory; but during the day he had nothing to do but sleep, earning sure money by a lazy life — merely by making fires!

"Hm!" The chairman of the parish council scratched his head when sundry villagers turned up their noses in the direction of Will Stoker. What? He should have set the fires? He was indeed a strange fellow; yes, they were right, a very curious chap, different from other people — that was the result of his life out in the world — but an incendiary? No! Was not his mother, Widow Driesch, a downright honest woman, a God-fearing woman besides, to whom every one must take off his hat?

The chairman put far away from him the tell-tales and busybodies; but when, shortly after, one Sunday night the hayrick burned which he had just stacked up Saturday evening, he too began to scent mischief. From the direction of Will Stoker's cottage he too began to smell smoke. Was it after all possible that Will Stoker could not give up the business of poking fires? He had been in the village since the previous winter. In the gray of winter nothing had happened; but now, when the sun was shining again, when it was aglow in the heavens, when day in and day out it spread its red heat over cottages and fir-trees, over

grain field and hill top, when the underbrush flared and the pebbles in the dry river bed scintillated, and the powdery dust on the sun-baked roads was blinding, now—!

Strange thoughts surged through the chairman's head; he took counsel with this neighbor and that, secret counsel. Behind the barn they whispered, like pairs of lovers, or far out on the open field, where only the quivering heat could overhear them. Appealing to courts of law is always bad business; one never knows whether one is going to get justice or injustice. But before one should let the village be laid in ashes, now, just now, when the well was beginning to run dry, when even the brook in the cooler valley trickled only in a thin stream over shining stones, now, when one must be mindful of the harvest—it was abundant this year, but who could have the courage to gather it into the barns?—now the watchword was, better accuse than regret!

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On a warm evening after a serene summer day the constable from the nearest city hall and the chairman of the parish council plodded along together toward the cottage of the Widow Driesch.

Katherine Driesch was cooking her evening porridge. Her William had just driven in the herd; the last blast of his trumpet still reverberated in the air and every cow was rushing, tail up, into her stall. The herdsman could now rest from his labors. He was sitting on his stool by the hearth, with the bowl in his lap, the spoon in his hand, and his mother was serving him his evening meal. But he paid no attention to the scraps of bacon which swam like appetizing little fishes in the porridge. With unaverted eyes he gazed at the fireplace, where the sparks were dancing.

His mother said, "Eat, my boy," took the scraps of bacon out of her own bowl, and gave him these also. Her William was fond of bacon, and though it might be wickedly

dear, the boy must have his scraps every evening. What else had he in the world? Nothing at all, poor boy!

Of five sons, he was the last — two had died young, two had fallen in France — all these afflictions she had borne with Christian resignation. But that William had down there so worn himself out with labor that he had had to be taken to the hospital and in the prime of life had been declared no longer able-bodied, that grieved her. Up here he had, to be sure, obtained the position of village herdsman — but was that a proper office for one who had always been cleverer than the other boys of his age? — who even today was cleverer than all those who since his time had passed through the hands of the schoolmaster,— who really ought to have been ordained in the Church, if they had only had the money. A dunce can herd swine and drive cattle!

The mother suppressed a sigh and brushed William's bushy brows back from his eyes.

He merely grunted; and when she urged him, saying, "Eat, my boy — your favorite supper: scraps and buckwheat porridge!" — he mechanically carried a spoonful to his lips and let it run out of the other corner of his mouth. His brow remained contracted, and from the back of his head, where a fringe of hair was all that remained, a tremor seemed to run down the length of his spine. His eyes stared blankly, until suddenly they began to roll, up and down, right and left; involuntarily they followed the dancing sparks in the fireplace.

The mother watched her son intently while, silently and without the usual sipping and a satisfied smacking of the lips, she emptied her bowl. With a mute gesture she drove away the cat, which had crept up purring and was rubbing its head on the man's legs. She herself hardly dared to breathe. What was William thinking about, that he was so still? A short while ago, in winter, he had been much more talkative. What stories he had told of the factories down there, with their wheels and cylinders, their chimneys and kettles, their furnaces that had bellies as big as a

beer-barrel at the kirmess — in fact, much bigger — as big as the pit of hell, with flames a yard long! He had grown accustomed to the heat, and now he was always cold, poor boy. Now, even in summer, when other people seek the shade, he stood in the broiling sun up in the field, munched his crust of bread, and gazed fixedly at the ball of burning gold in the sky. But even then, he said, he did not get warm enough. The whole day she had to keep the fire burning on the hearth, and in the hardest winter she had never had to collect so much brushwood and so many fir-cones as now.

Wiping the profuse sweat from her brow and loosening a little the cotton kerchief about her lean and wrinkled throat, Katherine Driesch picked up another armful of brushwood from the chimney-corner, broke it in pieces over her knee, and stuffed all the pieces together into the jaws of the fireplace. It was almost ready to burst.

But with a groan and shiver her son rubbed his hands, saying slowly and hesitatingly, as though every word cost him pain, and yet as though in haste to speak it, "Mother — go — to — bed."

"All right," said she, already reaching for her cap; for she knew that when William had not had one of his "good days" he was apt to be impatient. And so she meant to do quickly what he wished and draw the coverlet over her ears, though people were still stirring outside. From a distance the shrill cries of maidens could be heard, and the hammering of scythes.

William listened also. He had now stood up. Craning his neck, so that the cords were tense and rigid, he remained motionless. His knees were bent, his underlip protruding. Only the eyes in his sombre countenance moved incessantly, peering in terror, like those of a hunted wild beast that itself is impatient to hunt its prey. The nostrils in his bull-dog face quivered, as if eager to catch a scent.

Through the deepening darkness of the room the old woman's mumbled prayer was heard:

"Hail to thee, Mary, that art highly favored,
The Lord is with thee,
Blessed art thou among women
And blessed is the fruit of thy——"

She stopped, thinking of her son. "William!" And when he did not come, she climbed out of bed again, and crept barefoot to him, and on the forehead of the man of forty made the sign of the cross as once she had done on the forehead of the boy of four, and contentedly crept back to bed. A moment later and she was sleeping in peace.

A strange smile passed over the gloomy face of her son: now she was asleep — now she was asleep — and now he was going — to light the fire in his furnaces — brr! he was cold — but soon he should be warm again — hi! when the sparks danced and the red glow spread, shooting out toward you as if to dry your marrow — hot, ever hotter — ha, who comes there, who wants to interfere?

Startled, he suddenly stood still, his features convulsed as if in pain.

A strong hand pressed the latch of the front door. The door was not locked; it opened, and out of the soft twilight of the mild summer night the constable and the chairman stepped into the seething darkness of the widow's cottage.

"Are you already asleep?" said the chairman, somewhat embarrassed. "Eh, Katie, excuse us! Do you hear?"

But the constable had already seized hold of him on whose account they came, and had held him motionless with a firm fist accustomed to overcoming resistance.

Will Stoker did not offer to struggle; he cowed there, his head drooping between his shoulders. All he did was to utter a peevish cry, as children do when rudely awakened from sleep.

The old woman, who had not been aroused by the loud call of the chairman, woke up now immediately and sat up in bed.

"William, where are you? What is the matter, William?"

"He is here — don't get excited," said the chairman, groping his way to the hearth and stirring the embers till they blazed up and lighted the room. "Katie, be sensible, make no disturbance! William here we are going to take away with us for a while — he is — he must — he —"

"Take away William — where, I should like to know?" The woman stopped short. "William? — no indeed, he stays here," she said in a decided tone, and reached for her skirts on the stool by the bedside.

"Remain where you are, stay in bed! Pst! —"

The chairman was about to cover the woman's mouth with his hand; but she had seen the gleam of brass buttons on the uniform, and in senseless fear of the constable had uttered a piercing shriek. With both feet she leaped out of bed and now stood trembling before the two men.

What did they want here? And in the dead of night! In a stupor of horror her eyes wandered from one to the other. Then she saw the iron grip in which the constable held her William. What — what had her William done? Nothing! They must let him go, let him go at once!

Screaming reproaches she made up to the constable; but he rudely brushed her to one side.

"Hold your tongue, woman," he said curtly, "do not get yourself into trouble. Forward, march!"

With a prod in the back he urged his prisoner on. But the old lady seized the skirts of his coat and held him fast with unlooked-for strength.

"William, William," she cried at the top of her lungs, "What has he done, what can he have done? Constable, oh, leave him here; in all his life he has never done anything wrong; he always goes straight to bed; he does not drink, he never quarrels, he is always peaceable — oh, do him no harm! Jesus, Mary, constable, dear constable, do the child no harm!"

Her teeth chattered in fear and sobbing; she had let go the uniform and tried now to release her son from the iron grasp. She probably did not herself know that she was hitting and scratching.

The constable had no little difficulty in shaking off the woman, especially when the prisoner, incited by the example of his mother, also began to offer resistance. But finally a vigorous push disposed of the old woman, and handcuffs, taken in a twinkling from his pocket, fettered the culprit.

"To jail?—" The woman's outcry echoed from the dingy walls. She lay on her knees and wrung her hands. "Nicholas, Nicholas, constable, God in heaven, what has he done? I swear he is as innocent as a new-born babe! He never cuts grass in other people's fields, he tears off no branches in the wood—he never climbed the fence to steal the pastor's apples—believe me, believe me, by my eternal salvation, he is a good boy! He always sent me coffee and sugar, and a black apron to wear to church on Sunday, and he had his photograph taken for his mother, and every year he came to spend one day with me. Oh, he is so good, believe me every word! I will die on the spot if I am not telling the simple truth. Nicholas"—she turned beseechingly to the chairman—"Nicholas, you have known me all the days of my life. Have I ever told you a lie? Help me! Let him stay here!" She made a motion as if to embrace his knees.

"Do not be too hasty, Katie," murmured the chairman as he drew back. "Your William will soon be coming home again; it is only that he may prove that he—hm—" In embarrassment he tried to avoid the woman's anxiously penetrating look. "Hm, in order that we may find out—in short, that it was not he who lighted all these fires."

"Fires? He—lighted the fire?" Utterly nonplussed the woman glared at her own hearth. "No, I have always lighted the fire myself!"

"Nonsense!" The constable was becoming impatient; the idea had been to arrest the fellow without further ado, and now the tumult had lasted so long that soon the whole street would swarm with curious spectators. "Stupid woman, we are not talking about that fire. He has been setting fires, the scalawag! Forward now, march!"

William had been setting fires? The old woman lifted her hands in amazement. It could be believed that her William had set fires!

"Jesus, Mary!" she made the sign of the cross and folded her hands. "A sin!" Why, that was a crime! Her William a criminal? That was almost enough to make you laugh! "Ha, ha!" She laughed convulsively: "No, constable, William never does anything of that kind."

"Come along," said the constable, shoving William out of the door. "We shall find out about that. If the fellow has not done it, they will send him back home again before very long!"

Indeed they would! Of this she was quite certain.

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But William did not come as soon as Widow Driesch had expected. Four times she had already been at the chairman's house to find out about it, and on the street and in the fields she shouted after him, "Hey, Nicholas, when is William coming home?"

But he too could tell her nothing. He only shrugged, and consoled her, when he saw her anxious face and expectant eyes, with the unvarying words, "Do not be so hasty, Katie, he will soon come back!"

Meanwhile four weeks had come and gone. From the grove of fir-trees near the village went forth an extraordinary odor of pitch; slow-running, amber colored streaks had oozed from the shaggy trunks; every drop of moisture seemed to have evaporated from the trees. In the stillness of the August afternoon one could hear the falling of needles and the crackling of twigs and branches. The sun had glowed too ardently overhead.

A mealy odor came from the fields; the grain had been cut. It lay in swathes on the ground; the women gathered, the men bound it into sheaves, and the children, who now were at liberty to pass by the closed door of the schoolhouse, ran about over the stubble and collected the stray ears. The

hammering of scythes after the day's work was done, this monotonous village music, had ceased; in its stead could now be heard by day the creaking of ox carts over the hardened clayey road, while cries of "gee," "haw" and the cracking of whips woke the echoes in the glimmering air above the fields.

All the people were in the fields — all but Katherine Driesch; she had no harvest to gather. Quietly she sat in her cottage and heard, when the rumble of the outgoing wagons had died away, nothing but the buzzing of flies and the crackling of the brush-fire on her hearth. She kept the fire going as always; for when he came home she wished him to find things to his liking. And as she sat there, her idle hands in her lap — she could not work; what should she do, why should she do anything? — he was not there — the thoughts passed through her mind, merciful heaven, what if they did something to William! How long were they going to keep him in jail? She no longer put faith in Nicholas — he was deceiving her, in spite of his gray hair. He avoided her; yesterday evening she had plainly seen it.

She had run up to him as he was striding home in front of his loaded harvest wagon with his pitchfork over his shoulder.

"When is William coming home?"

But he had turned his head and said something about the weather to Matt, his son, who was walking behind him.

"Hi, Nicholas!" Was he deaf? She had seized him by the bosom of his shirt and shouted into his face, "When is he coming?" He must have heard!

But instead of giving any answer he had grown angry. "Let me alone!" And had lashed his oxen which, head down under the yoke, were toiling and panting along; "Hey, you beasts, get up, get up!" Then quickening his pace, he had passed on with his son and his farm-hand, and his little grandson high up on the sheaves of golden grain.

And she had stood there unanswered and had stared like a simpleton at the bits of white foam which had dripped from the mouths of the laboring oxen.

Why had Nicholas not stayed to answer her question? All night she could not sleep for wondering; and though she had been diligent in prayer, she had been able to find no peace. In the old days Nicholas had been glad to exchange greetings with her — he never had passed her by! Like a flash it dawned upon her that other people too avoided her! Her neighbor on the left, Joseph Heid, whose house leaned so close upon hers that the two seemed to be but one, used never to see her weed her garden or water her cabbage without having a little chat with her. And her neighbor on the right, Mrs. Schneider, a widow like herself, who needed but to reach out in order to tap on her window, had not knocked at her door for days. What ailed them? She was not conscious of any unfriendliness, nor had she started any gossip. Could it be because of William? Mercy, the poor boy; what did they have against him? He had tended the cattle so carefully; he was fond of every cow, and if a little pig grew weary, he brought it home in his arms. They would not find another shepherd so good as he. Now the poor creatures had to remain in the stuffy stable; nobody found time, during the harvest, to drive them out into the fresh air. Oh, they would see at last how much William was worth to them! But that is the way they had always been: if any one has been a great while out in the world, he is no longer one of us — and as to William, who was more peculiar than any of them, him they all looked at askance. May be that they envied him the money which he drew as a pension, like a retired gentleman; perhaps they even begrudged his having got in addition the post of village herdsman. It was such a fine living for them both. Now they did not need, as they were growing old, to go out working by the day as they formerly had done — ah, me! how fortunate she was in her William! Other men of his age are long since married and have children; but she had her son all to herself!

In the quiet of her loneliness the mother recalled to mind all the days of their life together. There had not

been much talk between them, William was taciturn; but at times, when the cruel headaches tormented him, he had leaned his head against her like a helpless child, and she had stroked his forehead gently, very gently, and he had purred like a cat in response. That had been such a happy time! Oh, if he were only there once more!

An overpowering impulse forced her to fall upon her knees here as though she were in church and vow to the Holy Mother on the supreme throne a candle of white wax, if she would restore her her son. In the midst of tears which, without her knowing it, coursed down her wrinkled cheeks, she promised, "I vow to thee a candle for thy altar, Mary, Mother of Mercy! I will light for thee a candle which shall burn so brightly, shall flame so high! Saint Mary, Mother of God, hear my prayer for thy Son's sake, for thy Son's sake!"

Fervently she repeated this supplication many times.

During the following night she thought she heard his footstep. She started up, her heart beating violently. But the footsteps did not stop at her door, they passed by; it was probably some one going home late from the tavern. Alas! nobody came to her house, and a nameless longing arose in her to creep on her hands and knees until she came where her son was.

Where was he? In jail! This was what the Schneider woman had screamed at her when she could no longer endure her loneliness and had knocked at the house next door. In jail — yes, she knew that; but what was he there for, what was he doing there so long? Neighbor Schneider had not known that either — or was she perhaps unwilling to tell? And why was he there? Well, the neighbor had made no answer to this question, but she had struck up a great lamentation about the evil world and wicked people, and had repeatedly crossed herself. "God preserve us, God keep us, Holy Mother, pray for us — such a fellow, such a monster!" And then she had sighed, "Katie, I must say I am sorry for you — heigho, such a trial!"

There had been no comfort to be got from Mrs. Schneider; on the contrary, since Katherine had knocked at her door a still more consuming agitation had come over her. She trotted back and forth in her room, from the bed to the bench, from the bench to the clothes press, from the clothes press to the hearth; she picked up now this thing and now that, first the pail, then the bowl, then the knife, then the spoon — all to no end and purpose. Back in the stall the forgotten goat bleated piteously. In the midst of her trotting the woman then stopped suddenly and took her head in her hands; but she did not remember the forgotten goat — what, what had neighbor Schneider said? "I must say I am sorry for you" — and "Such a fellow, such a monster" — whom did she mean? Who was a "fellow," who was a monster? It was to be hoped she did not mean her William! Oho! In the meek eyes of the old lady there began to be a gleam; she clenched her fist and beat at the wall of the room, so that the woman next door might hear, and reviled her the while, "Impudent jade, liar!"

No, her son was not a "fellow" and he was not a monster either. The thought of him appeased her wrath but did not suffice to banish her agitation. If she only knew why he did not come home for so long! Oh, if he were only here now, to taste of the good food which daily she cooked afresh for him, and which the cat then devoured because he still failed to come. She herself subsisted on coffee; she could not swallow a single morsel of food; her throat was as though strangled with cords. And her breast was weighed down as with a rock — there was no longer any means by which she could roll this away.

In former years she had rejoiced with the others when, heavy laden with the harvest, the carts had reeled past her cottage; when, without mishap, the neighbors had housed the corn, ripe and dry. Now, for all she cared, the heavens might have yawned wide and belched water without end, till everything had been beaten down as with sledge

hammers! She had used every morning to go to mass and had diligently prayed for divine protection against flood. Now the thunder might crash and the lightning strike and hailstones come rattling down as big as hen's eggs — why did not William come?

There was this year a blessed harvest. The people of the Eifel had never before had such a quantity of dead-ripe grain dry in their barns. If the good weather would only hold out a little longer! In two days the last load would be safely garnered.

The village was glad, all of the two hundred souls rejoiced, man and woman, boy and girl. Even the little children cooed with pleasure on the turf by the side of the grain fields where their mothers had left them in the shade of a chance bush, along with the jug and the tin dinner pail, while they industriously helped their husbands. Even in the weary evening the harmonica resounded and maidens laughed around the well.

Everywhere Widow Driesch heard people talking about the good season. She was now impelled to go out on the street. Where two or three were gathered together she drew near — were they talking of William? Oh, no! Disappointed she retreated, only to continue, passing restlessly along the row of cottages and pricking up her ears in the direction of the little windows. Laughter within and the rattle of dishes, the deep voices of men, chatter of women, and the cries of children. But about William she heard nothing. Her eyes, which found no more sleep, were growing dull and red and beclouded. The neighbors and the village and all familiar things seemed removed to a great distance from her. The only thing that she clearly perceived was the road along which her son would soon be coming — yes, must certainly come!

The women followed her with sympathetic eyes when she carried her bucket to the well, her spare form bent, her gray hair protruding in disorder from under her cap. But she now shyly avoided the half curious, half compassionate

greetings — what did these women mean by their stupid peeping? No, she needed now no human companion, she did not ask for a word from anybody — she wanted her son to come back, she craved to have him with her again. Defiantly and painfully she closed her lips tight and kept back the question that in spite of her continually demanded utterance. Why ask? Even the Holy One before whose altar she rubbed the pavement with her brow gave her no answer, and there was only one answer for which she yearned.—

On Sunday evening sounds of merriment pealed forth from the tavern. The men of the village were inside. Too bad that a Sunday had intervened, otherwise they might have harvested the last load. Now they must on the morrow go out once more into the fields. But — all hands on deck! Women, the older children too, even the old men must not shirk tomorrow, and then, hurrah! it would be all over for this year!

In the street the children were playing. They had established themselves right in front of Widow Driesch's house; the two flagstones that served as steps to the front door were so convenient for playing jackstones, or only to sit on, with the hands about the bent knees and the nose uplifted, while you yelled to the insects swarming in the warm air:

"Come, linnet, come,
Come beat my drum!"

Old Katherine kept her door and window tightly closed; the children's noise was painful to her. She sat by the hearth, with her head swathed in a thick kerchief; but she heard the cries nevertheless.

"Come, linnet, come!"

"William, come!" Lifting up both arms, she stretched her trembling fingers beseechingly on high. He had not

come today either. Jesus, Mary, where could he be staying so long? Of yore he had stayed away much longer, a whole year, years at a time, and she had never so longed to see him — then he had been well off, she knew — but now, how was it with him now? A frightful uncertainty tormented her. She had never seen a jail, and of the young men hereabouts nobody had ever been in one. Did he get enough to eat there; did they keep him warm? Who stroked his brow when he had a headache?

"Come, linnet, come!"

The children's singsong caused her almost physical pain. Hobbling to the window, she opened it so violently that it nearly fell from its warped frame, and cried out, "Get away from here, go along," and threatened with clenched fist.

The children were abashed; they had not been accustomed to being driven away from here. The littlest began to weep; but Heid's Peterkin from next door, feeling safe in the proximity of his father's house, stuck out his tongue and yelled, as he retired toward the paternal door, "Incendiary, incendiary, your William is an incendiary, they are going to hang him!"

"Ow, they're going to hang him," howled the chorus and scattered on all sides.

The woman stood speechless; with her threatening hand still raised she remained by the window. "Incendiary — incendiary — they are going to hang him" — resounded in her ears. Hang him? She shuddered at the thought. They surely would not do anything to hurt William? Incendiary — he was no incendiary! It was ridiculous — children's nonsense! But suddenly mortal terror seized her: had not the constable, when he arrested William, also said something about "fires?" She had thought no more about it, but now it occurred to her — "He has been setting fires, the scalawag" — really, it was ridiculous!

"Hahahahaha!" She laughed — an insane laughter, while she leaned far out of the window and held her aching sides.

Then she shut the window; it was time to go to bed. But she was afraid in the boundless solitude of her room — afraid of what? — She did not know, herself. What if she should call upon her neighbor to the left? She had the most confidence in Heid — he was a solid man, he had also been out in the world, he had got as far as Manderscheid and Daun. She would ask him what his Peter had meant by the words "incendiary" and "hang."

With heavy steps the old woman dragged herself from her back door into her little garden. She stamped her way through the potato patch which lay along the fence, heedless whether or not she snapped asunder any of the blossoming sprays.

"Hi, Joseph, pst!"

"Well, what's the matter?" Heid had just been feeding his cows. In his shirt-sleeves he came from the stable, still wearing the gay-colored cravat and the starched collar that he had put on to go to the tavern. "Well, what do you want?" The tone of his question did not sound very inviting.

But she paid no attention to this. Leaning both arms on the fence, she bent over, so as to come quite close to him. And in confidence she spoke, in a low tone, as though she feared the potato vines at her feet and the beans in her neighbor's garden might hear the words, "Say, Joseph,— incendiary — what does that mean? And hang — are people still hanged now-a-days?"

"Why do you ask?" He looked at her in surprise.

"Well, your Peterkin says that William — William —" once more the vague apprehension of something incomprehensibly horrible came over her, so that she could hardly utter the words — "he says that William, my William is going to be hanged! Oh, tell me," — despairingly she seized the man's hands — "Tell me, when is he coming back? They aren't going to hurt him, are they?"

"Hm, well"—Joseph Heid rubbed his nose and scratched himself behind the ears—"one cannot say for certain. William is now detained on suspicion and the case is being investigated. They will soon prove that he set the fires."

"What fires?" She opened her eyes wide.

"Why, the fires here in the village! There was a continual series of fires, now here, now there—oh, don't act as though you did not know that!—and since your William has been in jail, there are no more, not a single one. That is very suspicious!"

"Suspicious—suspicious!" she stammered.

"Yes, say yourself, is it not? Listen! You will yourself be examined. And all of us, as witnesses. William did it, there is no doubt about that. Otherwise there would have been more fires long ago. Good evening!"

He left her standing there and, hopping over the garden beds, he made a few strides toward his house, glad to have got away from her.

She did not call after him; she spoke never a word. She stood as if overwhelmed, her hands clasping the fence post. A cold sweat ran down her body and she shivered in a frightful chill. Her son—her William—he was—they said he—what was it they said that he had done?

It was as though she had been struck a blow on the head; all at once she could not think clearly of anything. There was but one thing she knew: her William must come *soon,* come *soon* and shut the mouths of those slanderers!

Groaning she tottered to her cottage. Inside it was now quite dark; only the glow on the hearth cast a few feeble rays. The black cat purred. She took him in her lap and stroked him until sparks snapped in his fur. He purred louder and louder, like a spinning wheel—the wheel was whirring in her own head.

It whirred and whirred: incendiary—her William was no incendiary—hanged—her William was not going to be hanged—the constable and Heid were asses—there had

been fires in the village — since he had been gone there had been no more fires in the village — the case was being investigated, they will soon prove — no, her William was no incendiary, her William was not going to be hanged — the constable, Heid, the judges, they were all asses — no, her William was no incendiary — but how, *how* prove it?

With a shriek she started up. Her William was innocent, perfectly innocent; she, his mother, could take her oath to this! But who — who would believe her?

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, have mercy! I will light thee a candle — so bright, so tall! — He is innocent! Help, have mercy, Holy Mary, Mother, help!"

She babbled and sobbed and wrung her hands. On her knees she crept through the room and beat the floor with her brow. What should she do, how could she prove that her William was not he who had set the fires?

The night was flying, the cocks were already beginning to crow, soon the ruddy morning would be peering in at the window. What should she do, how should she help him?

"Holy Mary, that art highly favored, hail to thee! I vow thee —"

There had been fires in the village; now that William was in jail there were no more fires; but what if — Her eyes suddenly began to stare; drawing a deep breath, she unclasped her folded hands, her lips ceased to murmur, she seized hold of her head and turned herself about as if reeling, and became at once quite calm; through the gloom of her tortured brain there flashed an inspiration: what if, after all, there should be fires again?

* * *

They were all far out in the fields. Even the old people and the children had gone out with the others. The children, dancing ahead of the wagons, stirring up the dust of the street, the old people plodding along after, the infant, or the loaf of bread and the jug of coffee in the dosser.

Only the appealing lowing of a cow that with full udder stood in the stall, the plaintive bleating of a goat that had been staked by the house, the furious grunting of a pig that longed to get out of the hot sty and roll on the ground, animated now and then the stillness of death that hung over the village.

It was not yet mid-day, but the sun was already very oppressive, its rays were actually heavy; they weighed down everything in the gardens: the climbing beans, the broad-leaved turnips, the grass turned to autumn yellow in the drought. The two closely built rows of houses blew hot air into each other's faces; they were like ovens. All of the timbers, which were of pine, the doors and window frames sweated pitch and, dry to the marrow, gaped in wide crannies. Now and then came a gust of wind; but it brought no refreshment, it merely stirred up the dust, and the air became closer than ever. Perfect harvest weather; the blue sky with a touch of gray from the dusty exhalations of the grain fields and a suggestion of dinginess from the hot breath of the steaming earth.

From the chimneys of the empty cottages no smoke was curling; today nobody came home to dinner, today nobody rested until evening, when the last load of grain should have been housed. Carefully the housewives had put out the fire on the hearth before they went to the fields, even pouring water on any embers that might still contain life.

There was smoke only at Widow Driesch's. She was the only woman at home, and she had a fire on her hearth, as always. A big fire. Was she baking cakes? Had her son come home and was that why there was such a cloud of smoke in her flue? Dense gray clouds poured from the chimney and settled heavily upon the roof. And now she opened the door, the back door by the side of which was the brush pile; Widow Driesch came out, in one hand a box of matches and in the other an oil can. Carefully she poured the last drop over the dry pile of brush, she scratched a match—hi, the whole box caught fire, she

dropped it and a swift flame greedily lapped up the oil-soaked twigs.

With wide-open eyes the old woman stood by and saw them burn. The flame quickly climbed up the wall of the house — crash! — the back window burst from the heat. Miauing, the black cat jumped out and with singed fur sought safety in flight.

She too now went away, slowly, one step at a time, often stopping and looking back: would not the fire go out again? She began to feel anxious. Had she perhaps not carefully enough raked the great fire in the hearth out into the room and spread it about the floor? And covered it with straw and oil-soaked rags? All her woolen things, her black Sunday gown and the kerchief — a gift from her deceased husband — she had torn to bits for the purpose. Had she perhaps not put sufficient burning chips into the bed, among the feathers of the pillows that she had ripped open? Oh, yes! The bed was already burning like a torch when she had tottered out of the back door, half smothered, with eyes blinded by smoke. Oh, yes, she could rest easy on that score, the house would burn surely enough, there would be a flame that all the village could see!

Somewhat more rapidly she walked on. She intended to go up to the pasture. Up on the hill top she could best see how the fire rose higher and higher, how it caught the roof, which her late husband had thatched anew for the wedding; how it consumed the house that her grandfather in paradise had built in days of yore!

She only hoped that nobody would come home too soon, before the house was really burning, was burning like mad!

She still worried. Concealed by the grove of fir-trees, the village was now out of her sight. Was the house still burning, was it really still burning?

She ran and panted uphill. Up, up to the pasture! There she could see, there —

"Ah!" A long scream of insane delight arose tumultuously from her breast. There the village lay at her feet.

A thick cloud of smoke had settled down upon it. But now, now — ah! — now there was a red flame shooting through the cloud! It divided, a whirlwind was blowing in it, fiery tongues stuck up, gigantic, joyously bright, and lapped to the right, and lapped to the left, and united, and flowed into one another, and grew longer and broader — became a fiery ribbon that unrolled more and more and speedily wound itself out as if from a spool.

With wide-staring eyes the woman gazed: Jesus, that was a fire — that was a fire!

It was a long while ago that Widow Driesch's cottage was the only one on fire. Dried by the drought and the ardent sun, the thatched roofs had been kindled like tinder. Now the cottages were burning, four, five. But as though this were not enough, the wind got behind and blew air into the flames. The conflagration swept down one whole side of the village; in ghostly haste the flames leaped from gable to gable. Like mats rolled together by a scrupulous hand, the thatched roofs curled up; first they sizzled, then they flared, but then — hi! — the ripe grain, every kernel a spark, exploded like powder and shot sheaves of fire into the air. A noisome exhalation mounted to the heavens and darkened the sky; from the stables came the desperate cries of the confined animals.

Katherine Driesch did not hear the wretched bellowing of the creatures dying in the flames. She did not hear the cries which suddenly like an alarm were wafted to her from far down in the fields. She did not hear the crashing of beams and walls — she merely saw. Saw, with triumphant eyes, a wild, undulating tempest of flame, a glow, gigantic, blotting out the sunshine with its redness, a torch, tall as a pine-tree, brandished by the wind and flaring up to heaven, up to the eternal throne of the Most Merciful.

The mother fell to her knees upon the pasture, upon the green grazing ground of the herds, and stretched wide her arms and clasped them together again, as though she were taking some one to her heart; and wept and laughed and

raised her trembling hands high above her gray head and cried louder than the hundred voices of the on-rushing villagers — cried into the tumult of the bellowing beasts, into the crashing of the beams and the crackling of the flames:

"My William! Now he will come!"

EDUARD VON KEYSERLING

GAY HEARTS (1909)

TRANSLATED BY BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN, PH.D.
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AT Kadullen dinner was served in summer as early as four o'clock, so as to leave the evening clear for summer amusements. Then the afternoon light rested steadily on the extensive white garden-front and the three ponderous gables of the manor. In the rectilinear beds the stocks glinted like bright, wavy silk, and the scent of the box-hedges was warm and bitter. A servant stationed himself on the steps of the garden porch and rang a large bell as signal that it was time to dress for dinner.

The host, old Count Hamilcar of Wandl-Dux, was already completely dressed and came out into the garden with his guest, Professor von Pinitz. Count Hamilcar, very tall and slender in his black frock-coat, had a slight stoop. His Panama was pulled low on his forehead. The smooth-shaven face with the long, thin-lipped mouth had a touch of the ascetic, like those faces in which everything that life has inscribed upon them seems mitigated and as it were disavowed. With long strides he began to walk down the garden path. The professor could hardly keep step, for he was short and stout; his white vest was stretched tight over his round paunch, and his face was red and heated under the cinnamon-colored, stubbly whiskers. He was telling the count a remarkable dream he had had; this was his interest at present, for he intended to write a treatise on the theory of dreams, and the count was giving him the material which he too had once gathered on this subject.

Count Hamilcar always had material gathered for the books which others planned to write, but had never written one himself.

"I never knew," he was wont to say, "which one of my books to write, and so I never wrote any."

"Imagine, then," the professor was reporting, "I was at the house of my colleague Domnitz, in my dream, you know. Well, Domnitz laid both hands on my shoulders, put on a very solemn face, and said in a very deep voice, which he never has had, 'Colleague, I have found the basic, original form of beauty, simply beauty-in-itself.' I tell you, I felt it in all my limbs, a kind of fright or joy or emotion, I suppose, I was so near weeping. Those are sensations which we can only have in dreams. 'No, really,' I said, 'where is it?' 'There,' he said and why — and showed it to me."

"He showed it to you?" asked the count, coming to a stop, "well — and how did it look?"

The professor squinted, as if to look sharply at some object. "It looked," he said, "why, it really looked quite simple, you know. A narrow white slab like the gravestones in the Jewish cemeteries, a yard high, I guess, rounded at the top, and in the curve a face: the eyes simply two points, the nose a vertical stroke, the mouth a horizontal one — that was all. What do you say to that, ha?"

"Peculiar," said the count, looking out into the garden over the professor's head.

"Yes, but the most wonderful part of it was," continued the professor, lowering his voice as if speaking of very mysterious things, "that I at once said 'Ah yes,' for it was immediately obvious to me, and I knew that that was beauty-in-itself; yes, I felt as if I had really known it for a long time. How do you explain that?"

"Why, that is not easy," replied the count a little absent-mindedly, still looking out into the garden.

Yonder between the hollyhocks and the beds of mallow there were now signs of life. A bevy of young girls and

ADOLF MÜSZER

A PORTRAIT

men came down the path toward the house, light summer dresses and flannel suits and an eager whirl of voices. Now the professor also became silent and turned toward the newcomers. There were his two daughters, big girls in flaming pink batiste dresses and yellow sun-hats, both very heated. Both were laughing at once in a high, rather shrill soprano. Beside them walked Lieutenant von Rabitow of the Alexander Regiment, a little stiff-legged in his white tennis suit. The count's two nephews, Egon and Moritz of Hohenlicht, both students, both very fair, their hair parted all the way down to their necks, had stopped midway and were sparring with their racquets. Miss Demme, the governess, was chiding and pushing fourteen-year-old Erika before her, and Erika opposed her by moving but sluggishly her thin legs in their black stockings. The two old gentlemen complacently let this wave of youthful life swirl by them. Both smiled a little.

"Do you see, Professor, yonder is instantly obvious beauty, too, really beauty-in-itself," resumed the count, pointing to a bed full of fat dark-red "Sultan of Zanzibar" roses, beside which his seventeen-year-old daughter Billy was standing.

It was very pretty to see the girl standing there by the roses in her light-blue summer dress, her round face pink and smiling and hatless. In the blinding sunshine her hair had a deep, warm brown like old port, and the whole picture was as richly colored as a flower-bed. Beside Billy stood Marion Bonnechose, the daughter of the French governess, who had been brought up with Billy; short and dark, with brown eyes too large for her lean, somewhat yellowish face, which were looking at Billy with watchful interest.

"Certainly," said the professor, "Countess Sibyl is indubitably very beautiful, but the beauty-in-itself in my dream was simply a semicircular white tablet."

The young people had disappeared in the house, and Billy and Marion also ran toward it, their hands full of red roses. The garden grew quiet again. The count threw

his head back a little, and drew into his long white nose the scents of the late summer flowers, of ripe plums and early pears, with the expression of a *gourmet* drinking a delicious wine. From the tennis-court a last straggler came, Boris Dangellô. He walked slowly and thoughtfully with bowed head; only when he passed the two gentlemen he saluted them and his fine pale face smiled, but his eyes kept their brooding expression, as if they did not wish to disturb their own sentimental beauty.

"Also beauty," remarked the professor. "Your nephew, Mr. von Dangellô, looks unusually well."

But in this there was something that put out the count. "For a young person," he said severely, "it is not advantageous to look so well: that diverts and detracts."

"You think so," murmured the professor, "I don't know, I have no experience in that line."

They had now reached the end of the garden path, stood still a moment, and looked out over the garden gate upon the stubble-fields and cropped meadows. Behind them the woods formed a blue-black frame about the picture, yellow in the sunshine — that dense pine forest that extended unbroken to the Russian border.

"I do not know whether I am mistaken," the professor began again, "but it seems to me as if good looks were more general in the present generation than in my youth. Nowadays every one looks well."

"Possible," replied the count, "but perhaps we are accountable for it, too. We now have the right perspective, and you know that pictures grow more beautiful when viewed from the right distance. But above all, Professor, we need that. In our old age we wish to have beautiful youth about us, we demand beauty of youth. That is very egoistic. We enjoy it at our ease. But poor youth. Do you think 'being beautiful' is easy? Beauty complicates destiny, imposes responsibilities, and above all it disturbs our seclusion. Imagine, Professor, that you were very beautiful. With every human being you encounter your face estab-

lishes some relation, affects him, forces itself upon him, speaks to him, whether you will or no. Beauty is a constant indiscretion. Would that be agreeable?"

"I . . . I suppose I can't just imagine myself in that situation," replied the professor.

The count smiled his restrained, somewhat crooked smile. "Yes, yes, we two have been spared these difficulties."

Then they turned and walked back toward the house.

On the porch they found Countess Betty, Count Hamilcar's sister, who had been managing his household and bringing up his children ever since he became a widower. She was dressed in her imposing white lace burnous. The white face with its little pink cheeks looked very small under the great lace cap fashionable in the sixties. Aunt Betty was sitting as at a sick-bed beside the reclining chair on which her oldest niece Lisa had stretched herself. Lisa, the divorced wife of Prince Katakasianopulos, wearily leaned her head back and half closed her eyes. Short tangled brown curls hung into the delicate pale face in a kind of Ophelia-coiffure. She wore a black lace dress, for ever since the annulling of her marriage she liked to dress in black. She had made the acquaintance of her Greek at Biarritz, and had obstinately insisted on marrying him. But when Prince Katakasianopulos proved himself an impossible spouse, the family was happy to be rid of him again.

Lisa, however, had since then retained a tragic something which Aunt Betty treated as sickness and invested with the most solicitous care. The tutor, a stately Hanoverian, and Bob, the youngest of the family, had also appeared on the scene.

"How do you feel, Lady Princess?" asked the professor.

Lisa smiled faintly. "I thank you, a little weary."

"We need rest," opined Aunt Betty.

In the background Bob's unmannerly voice echoed, "Wary."

The count looked discontentedly at his daughter. "For

excessively lyrical nerves," he said, " perhaps a little employment would be advisable."

" Why, Hamilcar," parried Aunt Betty.

Lisa raised her eyebrows resignedly and turned to the tutor to begin an amiable conversation: " Is it as hot as this in your home, too, Mr. Post? "

Upstairs Billy appeared at the door of the sun-parlor in a white dress with red roses at her belt, and as she came down the steps to the porch, all looked up at her and smiled involuntarily. She smiled too, as if bringing something pleasant. Bob voiced the general feeling by crying, " Today Billy looks first-class again." Boris followed her and at once took possession of her, to talk to her in a low voice. He always spoke with ladies in that way, as if what he said were confidential.

All the inmates of the house were now assembled, except the professor's wife. She always kept people waiting.

" Oh yes, my wife," remarked the professor, " she gives me sufficient proof that time is something subjective. She always has her own."

At last she came, heated and with fluttering red cap-ribbons. They could go to dinner.

Count Hamilcar loved this situation: to sit at the head of the long table, look down the lines of young faces, and hear the buzzing of the lowered voices. That cheered him. Then he kept up the conversation, and tried to have it agreeable and harmonious. But today something like a discordant note came into it.

They were talking politics. The professor was a patriot and a National Liberal. He interrupted the consumption of his peas, seized a crouton with thumb and forefinger, gesticulated with it, and said enthusiastically,

" Now, if you please, in science I as a scholar follow reason and logic quite unreservedly, wherever they may lead me, but in politics it is different, there an important factor is added, an emotion, the love of the German fatherland. Understanding and logic must share the supremacy

with love, no, what am I saying — they must be subordinate to love; yes, actually subordinate. So I too am quite ready to be at times illogical for love of the fatherland. Yes, my dear count, I am."

He looked triumphantly about him and laughed.

"Surely, surely," said the count, "it would be a bad thing anyway, if we were not now and then willing to be illogical."

Here Boris bent forward and began to speak with his slightly singing Slavic accent and his trilled r:

"You are quite right, Professor, but it need not always be love, it can also be hate. To us Poles hate is sacred too."

The count lifted his eyebrows and bent over his plate. "I have noticed," he said with an acrimony that surprised them all, "that hate as an occupation blunts the intellect."

Boris paled. He was about to flare up. "I beg your pardon, uncle," he began, but then he shrugged his shoulders and smiled ironically. Both Billy and Marion, who sat opposite him, blushed and looked anxiously at him. The two children farther down the table snickered. There was an awkward pause, until the professor hastily began to speak again. Boris was silent, looked down with an injured expression, and refused all food. Billy and Marion had also lost all pleasure in eating, and were glad when the meal ended.

The sun was already shining quite aslant through the fruit-trees when coffee was served on the porch. Count Hamilcar smoked a cigarette and looked complacently down the garden, which was again teeming with life. At this hour his eyelids always grew a little heavy. Yonder along the box-hedge Boris and Billy were walking up and down. Boris was speaking eagerly, making large gestures with his slender white hand, so that his many rings sparkled in the sun. There was in this something that displeased the count, but he did not wish to be vexed while in this agreeable situation. But when he rose and went to his room to rest a little, he met his sister. He stopped, laid one

finger along his nose, and said, "Betty, as I was going to say."

"What then, Hamilcar," said the old lady, bending her head very far back so as to look into her brother's eyes.

The count pointed through the window toward the box-hedge: "Those two out there, you ought to watch a little."

"Oh, Hamilcar," said Betty, "do let the young folks talk to each other. We were young once ourselves."

Again the count smiled his restrained, crooked smile. "Certainly, Betty, we were young once, too, and it would surely be good if our children had their own advantage from this experience of ours. Polish brandy-eyes produce an unhealthy intoxication; we have had enough and to spare of the Greek variety. You ought to watch a little."

With that he went into his room and stretched out on his sofa. He loved this half hour of rest. He closed his eyes. The windows were wide open. From the garden the voices came in to him, as they called, sought, and joined each other, and with them was the unwearying chirping of the field-crickets. "How busy they are at their work," thought the count, "what a hurry they are in; it sounds as if each one were madly reeling the thread off a spool. How those spools hum, how feverish is the unrest in them." He felt agreeably aloof from this unrest. As he dozed off, the voices seemed to withdraw, to become subdued. "Yes, yes, it must be so, the restless voices move away, die away, and then — quiet. Yes, it will be so — perhaps — we shall see."

Below along the box-hedge, however, Boris and Billy were still walking up and down. Boris was talking passionately at Billy. He was quite pale with eloquence, and knew how to put a wonderfully unreserved pathos into his words.

"I know your father does not like me; he wishes to humiliate me. Of course we are not loved here in your land. We are the irksome ones all through history. Obstinate idealists are not loved. He who is born with a

pain, he who is brought up for a pain, is uncongenial, I know. To be unhappy is out of date here among you, it is not *comme il faut.*"

"Oh, Boris, why do you talk so," said Billy in a voice hoarse with emotion, "we people here, all of us, like you."

Boris shrugged his shoulders. "All of us, good heavens, as if I cared about that. But you, Billy, I know you are good, you are for me,—but no, not as I understand it. Look, we Poles, all of us going about with a wound in our hearts, understand love differently. We demand a love which will take our side unconditionally, without a question, without looking around, which is wholly, wholly, wholly for us. But," and Boris made a gesture as if he were casting a world from him, "but, where do we find such a love?"

The sun was now hanging above the fringe of forest, a raspberry-red disk. Billy stood still and looked wide-eyed at the sun. The dark blue of those eyes became bright with tears, and two tiny red suns were reflected in them.

"Oh, Boris, why must you talk so," she struggled to say, "of course you know—what shall I do, what can I do?"

"You can do everything," retorted Boris mysteriously.

Billy's heart swelled painfully with vast compassion for the handsome pale lad before her, and it really seemed to her at this moment as if she could do anything and everything for him.

The garden was now quite red with the light of evening. Everywhere the young girls and men were standing together, excited by the violent, many-colored light as by a festal illumination. Egon von Hohenlicht was making the professor's daughters laugh, always simultaneously. Moritz was walking about with Marion between the beds of stocks, and they were speaking of Billy. Even little Miss Demme and the stately Hanoverian were standing together a little to one side and whispering. Lisa had had the reclining chair carried out to the grass-plot under the pear-tree. There she lay motionless, as if she feared a movement might disarrange the lovely ruddy light that floated over

her. Lieutenant von Rabitow had stretched out on the turf at her feet.

"Oh, how beautiful that is," said Lisa with a softly plaintive melody in her voice, "seeing it thus, one would not believe that there is so much pain on this earth too."

"Quite right," remarked the lieutenant, "but we must not think of that. When I have taken my bath in the evening and finished my toilet, and go down into the street, — the restaurants are prettily lighted, and when I turn a corner sharply I bump into dear little giggling girls, and then I reflect a little and ask myself where I am going — why, then I drive out of my own head the thought of being on duty tomorrow, with recruits, et cetera."

"I believe you are happy, Lieutenant von Rabitow," said Lisa softly.

On the veranda, again, Countess Betty and Madame Bonnechose were sitting together, folding their hands in their laps and saying reverently, "*Ah, la jeunesse, la chère jeunesse.*"

Only the two children were dissatisfied. Bob and Erika stood on the garden-walk, grumbling because there was no prospect of some amusement: a walk, or a general game.

"If all of them never do anything but get engaged," said Bob, "then of course there's nothing doing. Boris takes possession of Billy as if she was Poland."

"That won't do him any good," remarked Erika, "papa is against the marriage, I know he is."

The sun had set. From the forest and across the meadows came a damp breath that shook the branches of the old fruit-trees. Monotonous and plaintive was the singing of the peasant-girls walking down the dusky country-road.

Bob had achieved his general game. One person stood by a tree and counted, the others hid. Billy ran over to the dense barberry-bush. There it was dark, and one smelled the boards of an old wooden box that stood there, garden loam, and the sourish barberries. Billy was a little breathless, her heart beat so violently, she heard it beat:

it sounded like soft steps running, hurry, hurry, toward an unknown goal. A great agitation made Billy shrink and shudder, such an agitation as makes the universally familiar things round about seem strange,— significant and as it were pregnant with secretly, noiselessly advancing events. Billy was ready for any experience. Boris' mellow voice seemed to raze all the barriers with which this child had been solicitously hedged in. Ah yes, to be able to share Boris' life, so full of great feelings and great words — this was what Billy now must have.

"Billy," she heard a low voice in the darkness.

It was Boris. Billy was not surprised; she had felt him so passionately all this time that his presence seemed to her a matter of course.

"Yes, Boris," she answered as softly.

He now stood quite close to her, she detected the strong, sweet perfume he liked to use.

"Billy," he said, "I come to obtain certainty from you." He was silent, but Billy could say nothing, and waited. The event whose noiseless advance she had felt now stood before her.

"Look, Billy," continued Boris, and his voice sounded a trifle dry and pedagogical, "I must know whether you are in my life that on which I can absolutely rely. I cannot imagine my life without you, but for that very reason I must not delude myself, for if I should be deluded in this, it might be my destruction."

He waited again.

"But Boris, you surely know — " began Billy, but he interrupted her irritably:

"No, I don't know, I can't know. You don't understand me, all that is quite different."

Billy was ready to weep; the stern voice that challenged her out of the darkness was torturing her unspeakably. "I do understand, certainly I do. Why should I not understand you? Why do you say that? Go and talk to papa tomorrow: they are all getting engaged, why must it be so

terribly sad in our case?" She was ready to weep; wearily she sat down on the old box. Then she heard Boris laugh softly, it was the quick, proud laugh with which he loved to conceal his agitation. Now he too sat down on the box, took Billy's hand, this cold girlish hand, into his own, as if it were something fragile and precious, and began to speak again.

"No, no, you don't understand me. Of course I shall speak with your father, for I want to be correct; but what good will it do?—your father hates me. I have always had to fight for my happiness, and that is what I want and you must want the same. Everything is immaterial, do you hear?—everything: only one thing matters, that you and I may be united. I see only you, and you must see only me, and what comes of it must not affect us, only you and I, you and I." He was still speaking softly, but his voice resumed its passionately singing tone. He intoxicated himself again with his own words, his own Self. "If you cannot do that, then say so at once, for then it is better for me to go away, no matter what becomes of me. I can die, but to be deceived, that goes beyond my strength. Can you do it? Speak, speak!" And he pressed her hand and shook it.

"Yes, I can," replied Billy obediently.

"Then," continued Boris, "we are going toward each other on the same road: on both sides there are high walls and we can see nothing but this road, and you see me and I see you and we are going toward each other, that is all. Do you understand?"

"Yes," said Billy, and she actually saw this yellow road between the gray walls under a pale-gray sky, and two solitary figures going toward each other.

"It is immaterial," said Boris, "whether our love is tragic, the only point is the love itself. We Poles cannot help it if we are born adventurers, history is to blame for that; but adventurers need absolutely reliable companions. Are you one? Speak."

Now he drew her firmly to him and kissed her. The

great words, her great compassion, these lips that kissed her, these hands that feverishly caught at her — all this hurt her. O dear, she thought, if only this were over. "Please," she whispered, "go now."

Boris at once released her, stood up, and said politely, "If you wish it. But Billy, I am afraid you are still holding quite aloof from me."

"But I won't be aloof," cried Billy tearfully, and now her tears did actually come. Boris stood there a moment in silence, then he softly said "Good night," and left her. Billy remained sitting on the box, clapped her hands to her face, and wept. The night-dew was dripping among the barberry bushes. Somewhere out yonder a bat was whirring through the darkness, uttering its timid and infinitely lonely cry. Billy was cold, and she was frightened too. She felt as if something were advancing in the gloom that would take her and carry her away. But what could she do? — and anyway everything was immaterial now. She belonged to Boris with his beautiful, incomprehensible pain.

She heard steps; some one stood beside her.

"Billy, are you here?" It was Marion.

"Yes, Marion."

"Are you crying?"

"Yes, I . . . I am crying."

Marion sat down on the box at Billy's side, also feeling very much like crying. Both were silent for a time, then Marion asked,

"Was he here?"

"Yes," replied Billy.

"And did he," continued Marion, "did he say anything? Are you engaged?"

"Yes, I believe so," Billy opined, "but everything is very sad just the same."

Again the two girls sat in silence side by side. Voices were heard out in the garden, some one called, "Billy! Marion!" and then it became quiet.

"Come," said Billy, getting up, "but we won't join the others, for I don't want to see anybody, nor do I want any tea; we'll go up to our rooms without letting anybody see us."

Over the roof of the house the moon had risen; the garden was suddenly alight and the shadows of the trees lay sharp and black on the moonlit paths. The two girls crept past the bushes along the box-hedge; from time to time they stood still and listened toward the veranda. There the others were sitting, and Billy heard the voice of the professor, then the voice of her father.

"Death, my dear Professor," the latter was just saying, "is incomprehensible to us for this reason, that we apply to it the standards of life. It is the same as with dreams. Apply to a dream the standards of waking, and you will never find your way in it."

"Good heavens," whispered Billy scornfully, "they are talking about death." Briskly the two girls slipped into the house. Upstairs in the gable were their rooms, side by side, and they had in common a large balcony which looked out on the garden. Billy's room was bright with moonlight, hence she did not light a light. "Has it come?" she asked Marion.

"Yes," said Marion, "today in the mail," and she fetched out a small package. By the light of the moon the two girls opened it; it contained a white china jar with "Anadyomenite" on the lid, and in it was a white salve which had a sweet odor of roses. "Here are directions, too," said Marion; she held up a slip in the moonlight and read, "Spread a thin coat of the salve on the face and then expose it for half an hour to a soft light, preferably the light of the full moon. The skin becomes transparent, lily-white . . ."

"Good, good," interrupted Billy, "then let's begin."

Silently and eagerly they went to work; carefully they coated their faces with the salve before the mirror, moved chairs out on to the balcony, sat there motionless, and looked

up at the moon, which hung round and yellow over the tops of the old maples facing them. Only at long intervals did one of them say something.

"You know," remarked Billy once, "he has very long eyelashes." "Yes," said Marion, "and they turn up a little." Then they were silent again.

In the avenue of maples below, Boris was restlessly walking up and down. He was smoking cigarettes and thinking. He felt himself, he saw himself today with particular strength and clearness, he the beloved, beautiful youth with the tragic, exceptional fate. This caused him a solemn excitement. But he also knew that he owed himself a significant experience. Of course Billy was a part of it, that was settled, and now he was devising plans, busily composing the destiny of the beautiful, beloved youth. Occasionally he would stand still at the end of the avenue and look up at the house, up at the balcony on which the white figures of the two girls sat motionless, their shining faces turned toward the moon.

Yonder between the flowerbeds the Princess Katakasianopulos was slowly walking up and down, very slender in her black dress, very pale in the moonlight. But then, who saw it? She too felt herself to be a precious instrument of precious experiences. But where were they, for whom these experiences were destined? At the end of the garden-walk she stopped and looked pensively out upon the white mists that rose from the meadow. Once she had lived for a month in Athens with her husband. Perhaps she was yearning for Greece. Possible. But why was Boris walking up and down alone in the avenue of maples? and why did the lieutenant stay there with the others? She seemed to herself like a festival which stands in lonely splendor, and of which all those who are to celebrate it know nothing. But from the veranda the voice of Count Hamilcar, calmly talking on, rang out into the moonlight night. He was still explaining death to the professor.

A very bright August morning rested upon Kadullen.

In the house it was still quiet. Only Countess Betty was going through the sunny rooms and pulling down the shades, for the day promised to be hot. Then she went out into the garden to cut roses. At times she paused in her work and squinted into the sunshine, looked over at the gardener's boys, or followed with her eyes the kitchen-maids, coming from the truck-garden with great baskets full of vegetables. On all sides this easy-going and well-regulated life was busily stirring. That made her feel good. When our own life gently begins to incline toward its end, we must warm ourselves at the strong young life of others, keep our hands full of great cool roses, and drink in with open lips the morning scent of this garden. Some one spoke to her from the maple-avenue yonder. Ah yes, that was Moritz, going down to the lake to bathe. The poor lad. Ever since he had fallen so desperately in love with Billy, he never was out of the water, was forever on his way to the lake. The dear children, how they loved each other and caused each other pain, and how pretty it all was. Aye, life, this beloved life. Query: will anything come about between the lieutenant and Elsa. Countess Betty was going to talk to Madame Bonnechose about it; she had a very keen eye for such matters. She gathered her roses together and went into the house.

She was astonished to find Boris in the living-room as early as this. In his suit of cream-colored silk, with the carnation-red belt, he sat in a chair waiting, pale, very handsome, and a trifle solemn.

"What? Up already, my boy?" said the old lady.

"Yes," said Boris seriously, "I got up on purpose, for I sent to ask uncle whether he would see me directly after breakfast; I must speak to him."

Countess Betty looked at her nephew uncertainly and a little anxiously. "Oh, that's it, well, why shouldn't he see you? But—what is it? Is it about . . . about—"

Boris nodded:—"Yes, about Billy."

"Dear Boris," said the old lady, bending her head back

a little so as to look her nephew in the eyes, "must that be, just at this time? It will excite Billy so — and your uncle, and me, and us all, and we have just been so happy and so jolly together. Can't you put it off?"

But Boris grew still more solemn: "I am sorry, dear aunt, that I must disturb the contentment here. That is, I fear, the part which I am once and for all destined to play," and he laughed bitterly; "no, I am a kill-joy, but I do what I have to."

"Oh, oh yes," said Countess Betty anxiously, "well in that case — perhaps all will be well. I will go right up to see Billy, for in any case she must stay in bed for the present; I will take her breakfast to her." Busily she hurried away, and Boris again seated himself in his chair, pale and resolute, and waited.

When Boris was called to his uncle, he found the latter in his study, sitting by the window. He was smoking his morning cigar and looking out into the courtyard. There the agricultural work of the forenoon was actively going on. In the pond horses were being watered, quite shiny in the sun. Harvest wagons rolled past, bright yellow against the blue sky. The count turned carelessly toward his nephew, nodded to him, and then immediately looked out of the window again.

"Good morning, Boris," he said; "you wanted to speak to me: very well, be seated, please."

When Boris had seated himself, it was quite still in the room. He had prepared so many big words to say, but here in this room before this old man, whose thoughts seemed to be so far removed from all that concerned Boris, nothing of what he had prepared now seemed to be in keeping. "Is he really only interested in the passing harvest wagons," thought Boris, "or is he maliciously shamming?"

"How that lad yonder lies on top of the load of barley," the count now began, "lolling for all the world like a king. He really has the feeling of ownership now, even though

not a straw belongs to him. He has more feeling of ownership at this moment than I have here at my window. Remarkable, isn't it?" He turned to Boris. As he noticed the tense expression on the pale face, he raised his eyebrows a little and remarked, "Oh, I remember, you wish to speak of yourself; I am listening." Then he again looked out of the window.

"Yes, uncle," said Boris, and his voice sounded vexed and quarrelsome, "I wanted to tell you that I . . . I love Billy."

The count pulled at his cigar and then said slowly and with marked nasal intonation,

"Certainly, that is comprehensible. That is natural. Perhaps many another lad will have the same experience. Billy is an unusually pretty young girl, and so young men fall in love with her; that has always been the way of the world."

"But Billy loves me, too," Boris resolutely jerked out.

His uncle looked at him sharply out of his gray eyes; the face kept its calm, only the nose seemed to grow still whiter: "My dear Boris, in my youth we too used to fall in love with young girls, and at times we doubtless said, 'I am in love with such or such a one,' but to say, 'This young girl is madly in love with me,'—that was not considered good taste in those days."

Boris reddened, but he felt himself regaining his assurance, a certain agreeable combativeness warmed his heart. He could actually once more curl up his lips in that sad and proud smile, of which a lady had once said to him: "That is so pretty that it must be hard not to disappoint people later on."

"Perhaps it is not good taste," he said, "but there are crises in life when taste no longer has restraining force; I only meant to say that Billy and I have come to an agreement. I lack taste, very well, but only because I should like to be plain."

"Oh, that is it," rejoined Count Hamilcar, and the cigar

trembled a little in his hand, "then I too shall have to be plain. As I have always taken an interest in you, I have frequently been called upon to help you out of all the difficulties in which your recklessness, or, to express myself less plainly, your interesting disposition has involved you. Then since you know all that I know of you, you will understand that for the happiness of my daughter I have not counted on you in any respect."

Now Boris found his eloquence again, found again all the big words that he had got ready yesterday in the maple-avenue, and he had to rise from his chair to say them.

"I know all that you have done for me, uncle. I know my failings, too. But that is not what decides in this case. Billy's love for me is undeserved good fortune. Such happiness is always undeserved. But not to stretch out my hands toward it would be suicide for me, yes sheer suicide."

"My dear boy," interrupted the count, "the use of the word suicide as a rhetorical device should be urgently discouraged, in the interests of good taste."

Boris grew impassioned, and his voice rose to a high key: "I care nothing for rhetorical devices or good taste. The matter at issue is my destiny, but that would of course be immaterial, immaterial to you. But Billy is concerned, Billy gives me my right, and even if I am reckless and unworthy and a bad match and unattractive, Billy's love is my right."

He had finished and re-seated himself in his chair. That had relieved him. The count gently stroked his white nose and retorted,

"The right to fall in love with my daughter I cannot deny you, nor the right to ask me for the hand of my daughter, but what you just said sounded rather as if you were asking me in Billy's name for your own hand."

"I wanted to be open and loyal toward you," replied Boris.

"Oh, did you?" remarked the count. "You call it loyal, as a guest in my house, to 'come to an agreement,' as

you call it, behind my back, with my seventeen-year-old daughter."

"It was perhaps not correct," said Boris wearily and with a superior air, "but good gracious, when anything so powerful takes possession here in the heart and here in the head, we simply give it utterance."

Sharply and angrily the count rejoined, "A decent man keeps to himself nine-tenths of what passes through his head and heart."

"You wish to insult me, uncle," and Boris smiled his handsome melancholy smile, "very well, very well. Perhaps we Poles cannot keep our heads and hearts as well in check as you Germans; but that does not prevent us from being decent."

"It costs little, my boy," scoffed the count, "to lay our faults at our nation's door; it cannot defend itself. Moreover . . ." He stopped, for his cigar had gone out; he lit it with much ceremony, and when he began to speak again the irritation was gone from his voice, and it had once more its contemplatively nasal tone. "The discussion here is probably fruitless, we are neither of us sufficiently objective in this matter. I therefore regret having to decline your proposal."

Boris rose and bowed formally. "Then I presume I can go," he said.

"Yes," replied the count, "the subject is exhausted for now. It should be added that I must beg you to terminate your visit here today."

Boris bowed again.

"Of course in the afternoon," added the count.

"Thank you," said Boris, and then walked out very erect.

Count Hamilcar took a long pull at his cigar and again looked out of the window. He wished to see another harvest wagon, and a lad lying sleepily on top of it in the hot yellow straw. In the yard behind a bush Marion had been standing the whole time, looking in through his window.

Now that Boris was gone, she too ran toward the house. Youth on duty, reconnoitring against old age, thought the count. He leaned his head back and closed his eyes.

He was a little weary. Of course she would come at once. As he knew his daughter, she would not let herself miss the intoxication of loyalty, of confessing, of having courage to stand before the cruel father. Goodness, how life kept distributing the same old rôles over and over. Disgusting. Now the door moved. He did not open his eyes: an unspeakable sluggishness made his eyelids heavy. He heard Billy enter the room, step up close to him, and stand still before him. Then he opened his eyes and smiled a little.

"Well, my daughter?" he asked, "come, sit down beside me."

"No, papa," replied Billy, "I had rather stand."

"Very well, stand."—He too had to stand when he delivered his speech, thought Count Hamilcar. Billy stood there in her white dress, red carnations at her belt, her arms hanging down, and the hands lightly clasped. Her face was pale and her eyes very bright. She looks resolute, flitted through the count's mind, Charlotte Corday at Marat's bath-tub.

"I simply wanted to say, papa," began Billy, "that I am *for* Boris, that I am on his side. Even if you insult him and send him away, I am for him, I must be."

She spoke calmly, only drawing the red carnations out of her belt and nervously pulling them to pieces the while.

The count nodded: "Surely, child, I expected nothing else. I fear we shall not convince each other. You will always see Boris otherwise than I see him. Our points of vision are simply too different. We cannot even hold the same opinion about what you are feeling. You consider it something lasting, even something eternal, h'm? And I—something transitory. Now I could appeal to my experience and say that I have seen more things pass away than you have. But you will object that what you are living

through has never been experienced before, is unique. We cannot meet anywhere. So there is nothing left for it but the old and tried rule, that I decide and you obey. I am trustee of your life, and when you begin to be your own trustee, I must hand it over to you undiminished. But to throw in this Polish cousin I should regard as an unprofitable debiting of this capital intrusted to me."

"But I prefer to have it debited and . . . and . . . and all you say, but with Boris," cried Billy, angrily throwing her carnations on the floor.

The count shrugged his shoulders slightly. "Yes, my child, in this our views differ, as I say, and for the present my view is the prevailing one."

Billy was silent. She now let her arms hang limply, her eyes grew quite round and clear, and into them came the strangest expression of helplessness, even of fear. "Then — then —" she struggled to say, "then I don't know."

A boundless repugnance for his paternal rôle rose in the count; was it really his function to torture this lovely creature? But when he began to speak, his voice sounded even somewhat more cool and ironical:

"Go now, my daughter. Perhaps it will afford you some peace of mind to think that for the pain which you are now feeling not you are responsible, but I. Life is rich in such little auxiliary hypotheses, as the professor would say, and why should we not use them."

Billy no longer heard him; her clear eyes seemed to be staring out upon something at which they wondered and which frightened them. Then she suddenly faced about and left the room.

The count passed his hand over his face. A devilish feeling, sympathy. It is really a powerful physical ailment. Then he bent down and picked up the carnations which Billy had plucked to pieces. He wished to keep them in his hand.

On this sultry day even life in Kadullen was strangely tense. Everywhere people stood together in couples and

whispered with serious faces. The professor's daughters sat a little neglected on the verandah, talking together in low voices. At times Egon joined them and flirted with them in a half-hearted, absent-minded way. Billy had withdrawn to her room, whither Countess Betty carried up quantities of raspberry-juice, and Marion was incessantly racing back and forth between the garden and Billy's room, carrying messages. No one was comfortable. Lisa walked around between the flower-beds under her red parasol. This love affair, in which she was to have no part, made her restless. The lieutenant had gone partridge-shooting. Of course, she had seen that in men; when there was a decision to make, or life became difficult in other ways, they always went shooting partridges. These poor creatures seemed to exist only for the purpose of helping mankind over difficult situations in life. Now she was looking for Boris, wishing to speak with him. Who could give the lovers better counsel than she. But he was not there. They said he had gone out into the meadow. Very well, then Lisa would have a conversation with Billy. But when Marion took this message to Billy, the latter became quite violent.

"No, she is not to come. What will she say, and she'll talk about her old Greek. The affair with her Katakassianopulos is altogether different from mine. Tell her that. She can't help me; nobody can help me." And she buried her face in the pillows and wept. Marion stood helplessly before her. "And Boris has disappeared," continued Billy's wail; "go to Moritz, tell him to find Boris and keep watch over him and stay with him. Go quickly." Marion rushed down the stairs again.

She found Moritz in the park, stretched out lazy and woe-begone under a tree. He blinked sleepily at Marion as she delivered her message.

"Bah, keep watch over him," he said, "what's going to happen to him? He's all right, and for all of me he can — — —"

"She wants it," said Marion.

With a sigh Moritz raised himself, took his towel, which was lying on the ground beside him, hung it over his shoulder, and struck reluctantly into the path toward the meadow.

All over the cropped meadow cobwebs were glittering on the short grass. Swallows flitted quite low over the ground. The sun beat down pitilessly.

"Incredible," murmured Moritz, "to have to look for this Polish narcissus in such a heat. Where's he likely to be? Probably lying here somewhere."

He did actually find Boris lying flat on his back in the grass under a willow. When Moritz came to a stop before him, Boris looked at him indifferently and said, "What do you want?"

"I," said Moritz, "I don't really want anything, but Billy sent me to keep watch over you."

Boris did not answer, but looked up at the sky again. So Moritz also lay down in the grass. This handsome Pole in his yellow silk suit was unspeakably distasteful to him. How he lay there, as it were heavy and satiated with the admiration of all the beautiful women that were devoted to him. Moritz could have hit him. Yet he felt a craving to be near him, for there was something of Billy where Boris was: Boris knew about her, he was the stupid, hateful, locked door, behind which stood the only thing that Moritz now desired. To sit before that door was painful, but for now this pain was simply the only occupation left to him.

"Thoughtful?" remarked Moritz at last.

"Yes," said Boris with his lyrical inflection, "he who is not yet done with his life has much to think over."

Moritz laughed scornfully: "H'mp, you've managed to crowd a good lot into yours already."

"Oh, I've hardly begun yet," said Boris sleepily.

Moritz now reflected as to what he could say, then he began, "Tell me, how was that affair in Warsaw with the dancer Zucchetti? Didn't you have a *liaison* with her?"

But Boris was not vexed. "How was it? Why, how should I know that now. You don't remember things like that. You might just as well ask me about the bottle of champagne I drank on the twelfth of August three years ago. I don't know." And comfortably, as if he were lying in bed, he turned over on his stomach in the grass, to let the sun warm his back.

"All right," Moritz continued obstinately. "But you did enough crazy things on her account, so you must have loved her."

"If you call that love in German," responded Boris, "then I am sorry for your poor German language."

"Is that so?" Moritz was provoked. "Then what is Polish love?"

"Polish love," said Boris, yawning discreetly, "Polish love is something infinitely delicate. It needs no more than a movement or a word to change it so that there can be no talk of love any more, but — well, heavens — of anything else." Boris raised himself up a little, closed his big eyes to tiny slits, and looked dreamily over toward the forest, which drew a very black line through all the brightness over yonder. "There was once a very beautiful woman. She was a neighbor of ours. I was on very good terms with her. She was accustomed to expect me at ten o'clock at night in her park. So far good. Once I was late, and instead of ten it had got to be a quarter of eleven. So when I got there and saw she was standing under a tree and had waited for me after all, I was glad, and at that moment I really loved her very much. But when I came closer she put on a severe expression and said, 'Well, you are punctual, I must say, and it is very chivalrous, too, to keep a lady waiting so long.' That sounded so pointed and tart and common, that there was no love left at all. 'A governess talking to a belated pupil,' I thought."

"What did you do?" asked Moritz.

"I made a bow and said, 'Madam, I only came to inform you that I shall not come today.' Well, and then I went."

Moritz shrugged his shoulders: "I don't see anything wonderful in that. That is the sort of thing you experience in order to tell about it afterward."

"You experience nothing and you tell nothing," concluded Boris, and he laid his head down on the grass again and pulled his hat over his eyes.

The two young men were silent; Boris seemed to be sleeping, Moritz sat leaning up against the trunk of the willow and looked out upon the plain, over which a uniform hum could be heard, the profoundly reassured activity of a sunny work-day. This made him sad and discouraged. He had a disagreeably distinct feeling that he himself was uninteresting and commonplace. The girls fell in love with others, unusual experiences existed for others; and even his sleek, pale-blond hair, his round face, his light-blue eyes seemed to cause him woe. And suddenly a very remote recollection came to him. He must have been a very small child as he sat with his nurse in the sunny garden-corner, yonder on the West Prussian estate. The old woman was asleep, her lean face reddened by the heat, and the air was full of a uniform, sleepy sound. The great burdock leaves, heated by the sun, discharged a strong sourish odor, and the child felt it to be something that would never change. But beyond the fence, from below in the village, the laughter and cries of children reached him from time to time, the children who had experiences.

Moritz started up. "Nonsense," he murmured, and he leaned forward and began to shake Boris. "Here, don't sleep."

"What is it," asked Boris, "why this brutality?"

"Come and take a swim," said Moritz.

"Swim?" repeated Boris, opening his eyes and looking sharply and reflectively at Moritz, as if trying to read something in him. "All right, let's go swimming," he decided.

The lake was very blue, and full of hard, gently swaying lights. Between the horse-willows and the club-reeds wild ducks floated motionless, like shining metal objects.

"Pretty," said Boris; "to climb down into this bowl of color is rather smart, sure enough."

"Oh," said Moritz ironically, "so you think the lake will be becoming to you."

"Yes, it probably will," said Boris, beginning to undress. "I suppose you swim very well?"

"Pretty well, and you?"

"I enjoy it very much," Boris informed him, "but it excites me; I haven't the feeling that the water is friendly to me."

"That means in German that you swim poorly," Moritz dryly remarked.

Boris laughed: "Your German is particularly good."

The water was lukewarm. It's like burying yourself in warm milk, thought Moritz, as he swam slowly into the flickering light. All sadness, all "these imbecilities" were gone, only a strong, quiet feeling of life warmed his limbs. He turned over on his back, wishing to let himself be deliciously and lazily rocked by the water, like the ducks. The dragon-flies lit on his breast, water-plants tickled his flesh as with small wet fingers, over him flapped gulls with wings of pale gray, and they looked down upon him and cried shrill notes at him, which sounded like the laughter of the professor's two daughters. "Billy, Billy," he murmured. Now he could say it without pain, it was only the expression of deepest contentment. Then he thought of Boris, and raised his head a little. The devil, was the fellow crazy, to swim out so far. Boris's head popped up over yonder between the spangles of sunlight like a dark speck, but it was not advancing; now it had disappeared, now it was there again. With vigorous strokes Moritz began to swim to the spot, and got there just in time to catch Boris by the arm; enmeshed in a net of water-lilies and water-plantains, he was just rising again, his eyes weirdly wide and black in his bluish face. Moritz towed him away, and when he got to standing depth he took him in his arms to conduct him to the shore. He spoke kindly to him:

"Water swallowed, my boy, yes, that's the dickens when you get into that mess yonder. Wait, we'll be on dry land directly."

Boris spat out the water and struggled for breath. Once on shore, he lay down in the grass; he felt a deadly exhaustion and closed his eyes. Moritz sat beside him and looked at him. Suddenly Boris raised himself up, threw his arms about his knees, and his strangely dark eyes, still wide with fear, looked straight ahead of him.

"Sleep, why don't you?" said Moritz kindly.

"I can't," replied Boris; "as soon as I close my eyes, I feel as if those cursed smooth stems were winding around my legs again and dragging me under. The strangest feeling. I had the thought: 'Now comes dying;' but there was no time to think it, I felt such measureless torturing rage against those stems, against the water that was pressing me down, all banded together against one — something of that sort I must have felt." He pondered awhile in silence, the handsome face quite pale and angry, then he suddenly smiled his proud, reckless smile. "So you have saved my life, brother," he resumed.

Moritz shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, stuff," he said.

"Yes, you have," continued Boris. "You are my deliverer, and I thank you. But I should like to know one thing: you hate me, don't you?

Moritz flushed: "A lot of hate I'm likely to have for you."

"Of course you hate me," asseverated Boris. "Now I should like to know, when you found me there in the last extremity, whether you didn't think: 'if I just look on now I'll be rid of him.' Or didn't you for a minute feel like laying your hand on my head and pressing down just a little? Eh?"

Moritz looked at Boris in amazement: "No, nobody thinks that sort of thing."

Boris lay back again, his hands clasped behind his neck The excitement of what he had just gone through was still

quivering in him and impelling him to speak, dreamily, a little as if intoxicated. "Oh really, nobody thinks of that! —what sort of people are you?—I thought of it the moment you suggested that we go swimming; after all, we don't have the catechism in our bodies by way of a soul. Doing, yes, that's another thing, lots of things you don't do, but thinking! I like to have a deed like that come very close to me. It is just as if we were for a moment permitted to take into our hands and hold some rare object that doesn't belong to us. And then it's so gloriously exciting, this suspense: shall you do it or not? We must seek such situations; but that's all one, I am grateful to you, it was very unpleasant down there. I never thought one would feel so alone in dying, just among water-plantains and the divers, that don't care anything about it. No, death must be undertaken in common. So I am very grateful to you for saving my life."

"Don't mention it," said Moritz indifferently while dressing.

"Yes, very grateful," continued Boris, "we really ought to be friends from now on, close friends, you know."

Moritz was now fully dressed. He stood still before Boris, looked down upon him with aversion, and said, "Just on account of that little bit of water you swallowed, no thanks." Then he went.

The noon meal was sufficiently uncomfortable. Count Hamilcar and the professor did to be sure talk eagerly on remote subjects, as if nothing had happened, but Countess Betty smiled but absent-mindedly and thought of other matters. The only sensation was that Lisa had not appeared in black today, but was wearing a mallow-colored muslin dress with old-rose ribbons. Boris, very pale, conversed with her as formally as if he had just met her.

"Reception at the Queen of Poland's," Bob whispered to Erika. The two children were unbearable today and had to be called to order again and again. Billy's chair remained empty. She was lying half undressed on the bed

in her room upstairs, her disheveled hair falling into her hot face, and she was very impatient with Marion. Again and again Marion had to repeat what Boris had said. "I want to know it absolutely word for word and you don't tell me that way."

"Yes, I do," asseverated Marion, "it was like this: 'Tell Billy that it is better for us not to see each other again today, and we won't take leave of each other, either; she must wait, she will have word of me, and then my fate and hers will rest entirely in her hands."

"He certainly didn't say 'fate,' that isn't his style at all," complained Billy, "and then decide — what shall I decide, oh dear, it's terrible. And you say Lisa had on her light-colored muslin today, what for? and of course Boris is furious because papa insulted him." She flung herself back and forth as in a fever. "Do pull down the shades, this afternoon sun is sad enough to make you die; and you have an expression on your face as if you knew something that I don't know. Say it, then."

"But I don't know anything," averred Marion whimpering.

"Bah, then go, I don't want to see anybody. Bob can come, but he's the only one; he can be as naughty as he likes here — that will cheer me up."

But when Bob came he was not naughty, but embarrassed. Billy in her excitement was strange and uncanny to him. So Billy sent him away too.

"Go, you're a stupid, tiresome boy."

Bob went, but in the doorway he turned around aggrieved, and remarked, "I don't understand unhappy love at all."

Now Billy lay there and listened to the sounds that went through the rooms below her, the voices and the slamming of doors, and she waited. That was her business now. For he had said so, poor injured, insulted Boris. When she thought of the wrong that had been done him, her heart swelled with impatient desire to do something for

him, to show him and the world in general that she was for him, and him alone. The summer afternoon droned at the windows, the house grew quiet, and Billy felt as if in this sleepy hour she were quite alone with her excitement in a world that would not hear of excitement or of events. So she too kept still, her eyes raised to the ceiling. It seemed as if she had lain there an endless time before the sound came at last, the sound for which she had waited. She sat up. The rumbling of a carriage which stopped in the courtyard below, voices, the banging of doors, and again the rumble of the carriage, which grew fainter and fainter, and finally slowly died away. "He is gone," she groaned, and sank back upon her pillows. Great tears rolled down her cheeks, but an inward tension had relaxed. Some one whom we love is riding away and we weep: that is at least comprehensible, and so she cried herself to sleep.

When Billy awoke, the room was ruddy with the evening light, voices came up from the garden, she heard the twins laughing, and on the porch her father was delivering a lecture for the professor's benefit. A fresh uneasiness about life came over Billy, and she got up to look out of the window. Yes, there was Lisa walking along in her bright muslin dress and eagerly haranguing the lieutenant, who walked a little stiff-legged beside her. Poor thing, thought Billy, she wants her love affair too. But Billy felt as if there were but one love affair in the world and that one her own: all the rest was simply bungling. Discontentedly she returned to her bed; she could not join the others down there yet. Where could Marion be!

When Marion came, she had to tell her story. How did he look as he rode away? How did he take leave of father? Of course Marion had not seen the things that really counted, but she brought a message. "But absolutely word for word, please," Billy admonished her.

"Yes, certainly, this is what he said," reported Marion: "Come tomorrow at noon to the linden that stands outside the fence at the end of the park. There Billy shall have news. Tell Billy that she alone has the decision."

"Oh, dear," wailed Billy, "this horrible decision again! What does he mean? What will be at the linden?"

And the two girls sat together and whispered about this mystery; they could not stop talking about it. In the room it grew dusky, and the mystery became steadily more threatening. Billy could endure it no longer and sent Marion away:

"Go, you keep saying the same thing. Send old Lohmann to me. She's the only one of you I can stand. Have her tell her old stories."

"Lohmann came with her little yellow face under the black cap, and the hands contracted with gout. She was an old nurse-maid, who was now spending her old age in a small chamber in the basement, by sitting at the window behind her geraniums, and eating the bread of charity. The old woman cowered down at Billy's bed and began in a lamenting voice,

"Yes, our little countess is having a hard time, everybody has a hard time, there's nothing else for it;" but Billy interrupted her irritably: "But Lohmann, is that what I sent for you for. Tell your old stories, can't you, I can pity myself."

And Lohmann recounted the stories she had told so often, how as a tiny girl she had taken milk and cheese to town with her mother, very early in the gray morning light. In winter it was very cold and they would warm themselves in a little tavern; other market women would be sitting there too, wrapped in heavy shawls like big balls of gray, and little Lohmann was given *Warmbier,* that was hot beer with milk and sugar. Billy saw all that, it was what she wanted to see, the little tavern full of those balls of gray; it smelled of damp wool and an overheated stove, and outside the windows was the blue cold twilight of the winter morning. That was sad and peaceful, and far, far removed from all puzzling decisions.

"I say, Lohmann," and Billy started up, "*Warmbier* would be the only thing I could take now; go and make me some."

Toilsomely the evening drew to its close. Lohmann had prepared *Warmbier,* but it tasted so bad that Billy could not drink it. Countess Betty and Madame Bonnechose came and sat beside Billy's bed, looked sympathetically at her, spoke of Billy's cough, of remedies, spoke cautiously about indifferent affairs, anxious not to touch upon anything dangerous; Billy was glad when they were all gone and the night began. She wanted to try sleeping, but in the stillness and darkness life again became very threatening, and dreary too, like numbers that have to be added up. When she did have a little nap, this adding and guessing continued, and in addition to it all she was forever having something to decide, and she did not know what or how. It was perhaps one o'clock when she awoke; no, she did not care to sleep, there was no pleasure in that. Through the hangings at the window a little pale light came in. She jumped out of bed to look out of the window: the moon was shining very brightly. Quiet and wakeful stood the fruit trees in the patches of turf, and the hollyhocks in the flowerbeds, and the moonlight laid a festive touch on the silent garden. Billy wanted to be out there. She dressed hurriedly and went to Marion's room to wake her:

"Marion, and you can sleep? I have not closed an eye, come, get up."

"I just fell asleep a little," said Marion in excuse, "what has happened? Where must we go?"

"We must go to the currant-bushes down in the garden," said Billy.

Marion obediently got up and dressed. By way of the narrow back stairs the two girls reached the garden. Billy drew a deep breath; that was it, the damp, sweet breath of the flowers, and this improbable light which made the sky, the garden, and the meadow with its white mists all seem so endlessly vast,—this restored to her the intoxication without which she could not live now. Here she could once more think "Boris! Boris!" and feel that queer flaming heat in her blood which gave her courage to undertake

anything. In the orchard the strawberry-beds, the gooseberry and currant bushes, were gray and glittering with dew, and from the kitchen garden the pot-herbs sent over their powerful odors; on the gravel paths dreaming toads were squatting. The girls went to a currant bush and silently began to eat the cool, moist berries.

"Yes, now it is different," remarked Billy at last.

"How so?" asked Marion in a business-like tone.

"I feel," said Billy, "as if everything were quite easy again, as if I could decide anything. I am not a bit afraid, and it can be as tragic as it likes."

"Tragic," remarked Marion a trifle indistinctly, for her mouth was full of currants, "tragic is like at the theatre."

From the other side of the bush Billy's suppressed laughter was heard: "Why Marion!" Then Billy straightened up, held a bunch high against the moon, looked at it and said impressively, "Tragic is sad, but sad like his eyes, sad but still wonderfully beautiful, more beautiful than anything that is jolly." Then she bent her head back and let the bunch glide slowly into her open mouth, and in this action she felt wholly magnificent, wholly beautiful, wholly a part of the moonlight night.

Gradually the moonlight lost in brightness, and a gray luminosity mingled with it and displaced it, a light which looked as if it were coming through dusty window-panes.

"The morning is coming," said Billy seriously, "come, let us go."

"Where to?" asked Marion.

"We'll wait for the sun," decided Billy.

"The two girls went to the end of the garden, where the meadow begins, and sat down on a bench. They were a trifle pale and shivered as they huddled together, but Billy sat quite erect none the less, her eyes large and wakeful, her lips as if ready for an excited smile. She still felt all the grateful solemnity of that sadness, which was after all wonderfully beautiful. The mists on the meadow became transparent, the sky turned almost white, a magpie

began to chatter in the thicket, and a crow flew through the glassy twilight, very black and heavy. A dream-world, and Billy felt that surrender which we have in dreams, for dreams give us all possible miracles even without our aid. Then came color, a string of rose-red cloudlets laid themselves on the sky, over the black tops of the forest trees there came a shower of red, and then suddenly everything was full of the commotion of a purple and golden light. "Ah, there it is," said Billy, and the two girls stared motionless and as if stupefied at the rising sun. But as the sun rose higher, and the colors all drowned in the uniform yellow light, Billy's face again grew serious and lined with care, for here was another day with its responsibilities and decisions. "Come," said Billy to Marion, and they again crept into the house and up into her room.

"Shall we sleep now?" asked Marion.

"How can you think of it?" replied Billy; "at twelve you must be at the linden. Come sit down beside me." She pulled up a chair for Marion; she herself climbed into bed, but sat up, leaning against the pillows. So the two children sat together; their eyes closed at times and then they slept, but as we doze in the train, constantly starting up again in fear of missing something. In the course of the morning Countess Betty knocked twice at the door, but she was not admitted. "No, no, we are sleeping," was the word. When Lina the chambermaid came, she was given the order for breakfast. "A whole lot," said Billy, "tea and eggs, ham, and bread, and a whole lot, do you hear?" She had a veritable traveler's appetite.

Soon Billy became very restless. She kept asking Marion over and over if it were not time, and it was only eleven o'clock when Marion was compelled to go down to the linden. Billy sat quietly in her bed with burning cheeks and folded hands, intent upon the strange tension of the spirit within her. Yes, it was all there, her powerful desire for Boris, the painful emotion at the thought of him, the courage for all possibilities, and the fear of what now

must come. But again and again she felt the strangest alienation from the Billy who was feeling and experiencing all this. The familiar noises of the house reached her; down in the garden the twins were laughing, in the corridor Madame Bonnechose was scolding a maid, and at the open window of the lower story Lohmann was singing a hymn. But the Billy of the unhappy love, who was resolved not to obey her father, who had to decide, she belonged no more to this long-familiar life. But where was Marion? Billy raised her bare arms high above her head, wrung her hands, and groaned, "Oh dear, why doesn't she come!" At last steps came softly running down the corridor, and Marion appeared, heated and breathless. The two girls said nothing; Marion mutely handed Billy a letter, sat down, and stared anxiously at her. Billy had become quite calm, and now held the letter in her hand without opening it. "How was it?" she asked.

"There by the linden," reported Marion in a low voice, "a little Jewish boy was standing. He had very large black eyes, two tightly twisted black curls hung down over his ears, and he wore a long coat like a grown man; he brought the letter. It was awfully weird."

"Of course it was weird," remarked Billy, and she leaned back among her pillows and prepared to open and read her letter.

Boris wrote. There was no heading. "Tonight," the letter read, "at about midnight, I shall be down by the linden near the park, waiting. No one must know. On one side stands everything that you have till now regarded as your life, on the other I stand — decide. If you take me, then come. If you do not come, I shall forgive you and again walk in loneliness my dark road. We shall never meet again. To approach so great a happiness and then be obliged to forsake it again, is fatal." There was also no signature. Billy dropped the letter; she did not need to decide, she knew that she would go to him. It seemed to her as if she scarcely had a voice in this, for the other,

the alien Billy, was acting, and it was she who must go down by night to the lime-tree. Billy's glance fell upon Marion, whose eyes were fixed on her in boundless expectancy. Billy smiled and shook her head a little and said, "No, I can tell you nothing." Marion did not answer, but her eyes filled with tears. She rose and crept softly out of the room; she was very unhappy. During the whole time she had felt as if Billy's love-affair were hers too; she had shared her love for Boris, the excitements and pains, she had felt herself loved in Billy's person, and now she was suddenly thrust aside and was again simply Marion Bonnechose, who was excluded from all the destinies awaiting countesses.

But activity and life came over Billy. She rang for Lina, asked for her new muslin dress with the pink carnation figure, and called for her coral necklace; and moreover she was friendly and talkative to the chambermaid. Lina had to tell her about the forester to whom she was provisionally engaged.

The day had grown very sultry, and in the west gray-blue clouds were piled up. "We shall have a thunderstorm," said Count Hamilcar, as he stood on the porch steps and sniffed the hot air of the garden. Countess Betty stood beside him, bending her head to one side and blinking up at the clouds. Over the garden walks Bob and Billy were chasing each other. The count followed them with his eyes, then he turned to his sister: "The emotional crisis seems to be passing off nicely," he remarked.

Countess Betty however looked frightened. "Oh dear, Hamilcar, I don't know, this merriment is not natural; I am so afraid for the child. Madame Bonnechose thinks too . . ."

"Do not worry, dear Betty," the count interrupted her, "whatever Madame Bonnechose may think. Young people like to regard love as a force, which is elemental, irrational, but irresistible; very well, then this force must simply be opposed by another force which may also pass

for elemental, for irrational and irresistible. Well, dear Betty, to represent that force is now my rôle.'' He smiled his wry, mocking smile, and went into the house to take his afternoon nap.

Billy was tired with running. '' Enough,'' she cried to Bob. She brushed the hair out of her hot face and thought a moment. What should she do now? — for she must do something, something, anything but keep still and look into the darkness that lay beyond this day. When little Miss Demme went past her, she took her arm, saying, '' Come, let's eat plums and talk about Mr. Post.'' But during these afternoon hours, when the sun rested upon the garden like a heavy, golden sleepiness, it was hard for Billy to keep alive the fever that she now required. Finally she went to hunt up Moritz and ask him to take her rowing on the pond in the garden.

'' What, you and I? '' asked Moritz, somewhat astonished and blushing.

'' You and I, of course,'' said Billy.

That seemed to be the right thing. Billy found it soothing to stretch out in a half reclining position in the bow of the boat, and have Moritz's heated, peaceful face before her, with the blue eyes that looked at her unswervingly with satisfied devotion. The water was very black; here and there a coating of green plants lay on top of it, which scraped softly along the keel of the boat. How wearily the old willows bent over the water, and a secure, contented uneventfulness dwelt here, an uneventfulness which made Billy weak and cowardly. Why can it not go on so, she thought. As the little crucians lie motionless on the surface of the water in the sunshine, only stirring their fins a little from time to time, just to feel they are alive,— that must feel good. But suddenly she had a recollection that was like a prick of conscience. She felt as if she were neglecting or betraying something. She started up.

'' Row to shore,'' she commanded. Moritz looked up in astonishment. '' Yes, yes, to shore,'' repeated Billy im-

patiently. And once on shore, when Moritz lifted her out of the boat, Billy felt that she must do something which would contradict the aristocratic calm of this quiet pond, the little crucians, and the old willows, something which would slap it in the face, and she bent forward and kissed Moritz. "But Billy, I don't understand," stammered Moritz, turning a deep red, but Billy had gone.

The evening came, with tea on the porch. As the moon rose late, the garden lay there in profound darkness; the wall of clouds had risen higher in the sky, while the western sky was still covered with stars. At times the blue gleam of a lightning flash flicked across the garden, and a sudden gust shook at the trees, so that one could hear the fruit falling upon the turf in all directions. On the porch only the red tips of the burning cigars were visible, and the voices of the speakers took on something soft and reassured, as if they were trying to attune themselves to the dying sounds that were straying through the night.

Lisa was sitting beside the lieutenant and speaking of Greece. "You see, Marathon, what did Marathon use to be to me? A date, 490, I believe, but on that evening, with the evening glow falling across the plain, it sounds improbable, but I said to — to Katakasianopulos, I said, 'Katakasianopulos, I feel Miltiades here.'"

"Certainly, very remarkable," said the lieutenant. He was now so passionately fond of hunting that he went out every day to shoot partridge; in the evenings he was very tired and could follow the conversation but feebly.

The professor was again talking with Count Hamilcar about dreams. "A dream is for us a reality like any other," he opined.

"Yes," rejoined the count somewhat indistinctly, for he did not remove his cigar from his mouth in speaking, "only a reality which we always cross out again on awaking. Those are experiences which we always throw into the wastebasket again."

"Good, very good," the professor continued eagerly, "but we do the same thing in our so-called waking life. When I awake, I look upon the dream with my waking eyes, and then it seems unreal to me; but these waking eyes are simply not focused for dreams. And then it is this way with all experiences: I firmly believe what I am experiencing at one moment, and the next moment I look back upon it and it seems to me unreal and false and I strike it out. So, if you please, the sky is now for me a great, beautiful hall, in which the many tiny shining lights are standing side by side and twinkling at each other in the pretty summer night. That is real: what is it to me that I may perhaps look at it tomorrow through a telescope, that is through an eye which was not intended for me, and find that it then looks very different. Look, a shooting-star. When the Lithuanians see a shooting-star, they say, 'Some one is going to see his girl.' Certainly, at this moment that shooting-star is for me somebody going to see his girl. That is my 'experience.' But, if you please, tomorrow I shall assuredly strike it out and think of asteroids or such things; but that doesn't prevent it for today from being for me some one going to see his girl, if you please."

All had looked up at the sky and seen the star, which glided hurriedly through the darkness, passing other stars in a wide curve, as if trying to shun them, hastily and secretly.

"That striking out," remarked Count Hamilcar, "if we could only do it just when we wished."

Billy was still looking up at the stars. That about the star going to see his girl had suddenly restored to her the whole joyful impatience of her love-affair, and she felt as if she were one of that great secret company of those who are hastening here on earth silently and hurriedly through the night to meet their beloved.

Upstairs in her room Billy kissed Marion and said, "Tonight let us sleep, and sleep soundly. But Marion, don't look so at me, as if I had died."

Marion tried to say something, but then stole anxiously and in silence from the room.

"Lina," Betty directed the chambermaid, "tomorrow I wish to sleep late, and no one, do you hear?—no one must disturb me."

Left alone, she began to walk up and down quietly and busily. She changed her clothes, putting on a brown cloth dress, put on her hat, wrapped herself in her rain-coat, took her umbrella, wrote on a slip of paper "I am with him" and laid it on her dressing-table, and then sat there like a traveler in a station waiting for her train. Outside it thundered at intervals. Downstairs in the sleeping house the old familiar voices of the clocks called to each other through the silent rooms.

Billy softly descended into the garden by way of the back stairs. Heavy clouds hung in the sky. Tonight the whole world was full of voices and sounds; a gust struck the trees and made them murmur with excitement. Withered leaves chased with a rustle along the path before Billy. Somewhere a window-shutter creaked, a branch groaned. It was as if an Event were straying through the gloom and waking the sleeping garden. Billy went very quickly, as quickly as in her childhood, when she had wished to pass through the dark living-room to the brightly lighted nursery. A flash darted across the sky and snatched the darkness, like a black coverlet, from the pond, from the willows pensively bending over the reeds, from the water-lilies lying quietly in all the blackness; but all this seemed as strange to Billy as if she had never seen it. She hastened farther, thinking and feeling but one thing: to be there by the lime-tree with him—there was security, there the storm would have been weathered. As she issued from the park, another flash illumined the landscape, and she saw a black figure, the pointed hood of the rain-coat drawn over the head, leaning against the trunk of the lime-tree.

"Boris!" Billy cried out.

"Hush," answered Boris, "come." He laid her arm in his and drew her away with him. They walked over a damp meadow, then along a field of barley, where a corn-crake rattled excitedly as if giving a signal.

"Where are we going?" asked Billy in a low voice.

Boris stopped. "You ask?" he said; "if you are afraid, I will lead you back. I will lead you to the house, you may be sure; there is still time."

"And you?" asked Billy hesitatingly.

"Ah, I!" replied Boris, and that sounded so sorrowful, so infinitely lonely, that Billy was again thrilled by that painful admiring compassion, which made her quite defenseless against Boris.

"No, no," she cried, "let us go."

They now crossed a piece of swampy land which was white with cotton-grass and softly smacked under their tread.

"That sounds," remarked Billy, "like the kisses chambermaids talk about," and she laughed at it. She felt strongly the need of laughing, of saying something jolly. Beyond the swamp the woods began. Boris stopped now and then to get his bearings in the darkness; he whistled once softly, and a whistle answered. At last they came on the forest road to a carriage; a man stood there — Billy saw this for an instant in the gleam of a flash of lightning, then again profound gloom. Boris spoke in an undertone with somebody; they were talking of the thunder-storm and bad roads. She heard horses rattle their harness, then Boris pushed her into the carriage, climbed in himself, slammed the door, and the conveyance slowly got in motion on the uneven forest-road.

The carriage was cramped and dark, the raised windows rattled softly, and beyond them lay the woods and the night like curtains of black velvet. At times lightning flashes abruptly cast a bluish light into this darkness. It began to rain heavily; a loud, uniform rushing sound enveloped the riding couple, and the drops drummed on the roof of the

FRIEDRICH WAHLE

THE GOSSIPS

carriage and beat against the window-panes. Boris heaved a sigh, a deep sigh of contentment and relief. He drew Billy to him, pressed her tightly to him so that it almost pained her, and even shook her slightly.

"That's what I like, that's what I like!" he whispered. His voice no longer sounded tragic, but boyish and exuberant. And then he grew concerned: "But you are cold, of course; I have provided a cloak, I have provided everything." He wrapped her in a great silk cloak which smelled faintly of musk. "That feels good, doesn't it?—that is the cloak of old Mrs. von Worsky. My friend Ladislas gave it to me; you know he lives there on the border in Padony with his old mother: a good lad! He has done much for us; he knows everybody there on the border, he has smoothed our paths for us, and perhaps we shall see him before the night is done. Is the cloak warm?"

"Yes," said Billy, "but it smells of Madame Bonnechose."

Boris was vexed. "Curse it! It must not smell of Madame Bonnechose; nothing must smell of your home. That is gone, dropped out of sight."

"Across the border, you say?" asked Billy.

Boris's voice again took on a tortured accent as he replied, "Why—I don't know, don't ask me now—of course there's nothing else for you to do, everything will come out all right, but now we won't think at all. This is what I have longed for, this is what I had to have—I should have died if I had not had it—to sit here like this with you, close, close, and about us it is all quite dark and black; everything is gone, is blotted out, the stupid world beats on the carriage and cannot get in, and you and I are quite alone and have nothing to do but to be together. Do you feel that? Tell me." And again he pressed her tightly to him and shook her slightly.

"Yes, I think so," answered Billy, "but talk some more, talk some more like that."

"Why, what is our whole life for," pursued Boris, "but for such moments as these, when we can forget everything. Isn't it this for which we toil, for which we humble ourselves and borrow money, so that for a short time all burdens drop from us and we feel one thing and think one thing: Billy!" He kissed her very firmly on the lips. "You feel, don't you, everything dropping from you and becoming quite pale and unsubstantial, the tiresome garden at home, and Joseph with the dinner-bell, and the tea with bread and butter, and that Billy in the white dress, who could do nothing and have no thoughts? All that is unreal and there is only one reality, and that is I. Tell me, do you feel that?"

Billy leaned her head against Boris's shoulder and closed her eyes. Certainly, all that was very far away, the garden, her room with the drawn curtains, the sleeping Marion, the old familiar voices of the clocks in the quiet rooms — all strange and unreal, as if it did not belong to her. But the carriage here with its cramped space and its darkness, the rushing of the rain, the rattle of the window-panes, were they real? were the hands real that seized, pressed, and shook her as if she no longer belonged to herself, as if she belonged to another, the lips which were hotly pressed to hers, and this voice which spoke softly and passionately into the darkness? And she herself, who was she, with a body and a blood in which a strange fever was venturing forth. She felt the Billy that she had known and believed in melting away within her, and it seemed as if something which had heretofore held her were releasing her, and now she was drifting along and everything was immaterial, for after all that did not belong to her, that burning and fever which it was now her sole business to attend to and obey. Now they were both silent. The rain seemed to be growing heavier, and with ever increasing frequency the hasty light of the lightning flashes flickered across the black forest. The carriage only progressed with difficulty, shaking and rocking. A great weariness made

Billy's limbs heavy, as if they did not belong to her, and imperceptibly she passed over into a dream-state, into that torturing somnolescence of first sleep in which the dream-figures approach us so importunately. It was the face of her father that suddenly rose before Billy, close before her, so close that the long white nose touched Billy's nose like something cold, and in the stern iron-gray eyes little golden points were moving, as always when he was angry. And she heard him speak in the calm, slightly nasal voice: "Yes, if this striking out were always possible," he was saying. A loud peal of thunder made Billy start up; she did not know where she was, only something heavy and sad was burdening her. She was cold. Boris too had been startled awake beside her, and as if in fear he put out his hand toward her.

"We have been sleeping," he said, "no, we can't do that, for if we do all sorts of things will come back, and above all the morning will come — that cursed light, how that creeps up on us." They huddled together shivering. "It ought never to be day again, we ought to die now, oughtn't we? — in a lightning flash: suddenly a powerful blue radiance and then again this lovely warm darkness."

Suddenly the carriage stopped. Boris let down the window and stuck out his head. Through the falling streams of rain a yellow light blinked; a dog barked furiously. "What is up?" cried Boris. Then he impatiently opened the carriage door and jumped out. Billy heard him talking excitedly; a growling male voice answered him, then another voice interposed, high and strident, with the amused ring of social intercourse, as if a gentleman were laughing at his own joke in the midst of a quadrille. Billy, left alone, was frightened, afraid of the darkness, of the voices outside, of what would happen and what she had done — the simple, painful fear of the little girl with a bad conscience. Boris opened the carriage door again. "Come," said he, "we must get out, this fellow refuses to drive farther; they say the road is impossible, a bridge is smashed, and

I don't know what all." He helped Billy out of the carriage and led her through the puddles of water up some rickety steps.

"Careful, everything is rotten here." Again the high, strident voice was speaking.

They entered a hall which smelled of smoke and onions, and thence a living-room in which they were met by heavy, over-heated air. It was light here, for two candles were burning on a table with a white cloth, and at one side over a small bar hung a smoking kerosene lamp. Billy blinked blindly at the light; the room seemed to be full of people. Some one took off her cloak, and the strident voice said, "Your eyes must first become accustomed to the splendor of Wolf's salon, Countess."

"Sit down, sit down," cried Boris, and thrust her across to the great black sofa which stood before the covered table.

Now Billy began to distinguish the figures in the room. There was a tall Jew with a black beard and flaming brown eyes; he was smiling quite sweetly. Children in their shirts crowded into the half-open door, and very large eyes, dark as balls of onyx, looked fixedly over at Billy from under tangled black hair. Behind the counter sat a Jewess, the false wig of red-brown hair pulled a little too far down on her forehead; her yellow, regular face and elongated brown eyes expressed a rigid, proud patience. Beside Boris stood a gentleman in riding-dress, wearing spurs on his boots; his fine, sharp-cut face was laughing, showing very white teeth under a small moustache, which sat on his upper lip like two inky black commas.

"My friend Ladislas Worsky," said Boris introducing him, "that is a friend for you! He rode over here in all this weather only to see us and warn us against some bridge or other."

Again Ladislas showed his white teeth. "Oh," said he, "that is the merit of my old saddle-mare: she finds the way in all weathers and the blackest darkness, perhaps because she only has one eye. But, friend Wolf, on with

the samovar and whatever else you have. Let your ' youthful blessings ' withdraw, and make things a little cosy here; and Mother Wolf, assume a more amiable expression. Boris, old fellow, no dejection! Let us sit down to our *souper.*"

And he seated himself at the table, bent over toward Billy, looked at her with his shining eyes attentively and a trifle impudently, and began to converse, cheerful and polite, as if he were sitting in a *salon.*

" *Souper,* oh well, what goes by that name; the delicacies of our friend Wolf we have no use for. Eggs at most: they are not penetrated by the Old Testament. And so I permitted myself to coax a cold chicken in secret from our old housekeeper at home and bring it with me."

He unwrapped the chicken from a paper, laid it on the plate, and began to carve it, very neatly and correctly; a trifle too dainty and then again too flourishing were the motions of the white hands with the many sparkling rings. He spoke the while without ceasing of the weather, of the road, of the Jew Wolf, and Billy answered as if he were a young gentleman who was making his first visit and whom she had to receive.

" This piece, Countess, if you please," he said, laying a chicken-wing on Billy's plate; " this is a Spanish fowl: my mother is interested in special breeds. But Boris, you are not saying anything, *tu n'es pas en train, mon vieux,* you are wrong, brother. You have every reason to be of good cheer, a tremendous lot of reason," and he bowed slightly toward Billy, " but we'll manage that all right. Wolf, come here with some of your sinful champagne. You know, our friend Wolf always has champagne on tap, and uses it to bring happiness by secret routes to the barbarians beyond the border."

Billy could not eat; the blue-and-white plates, the knives and forks, the tablecloth, were all repugnant to her. Yonder behind the counter the Jewess was still sitting, her yellow, regular face unmoved; the almond eyes looked at Billy

indifferently, proudly, and patiently, seeming to say, "I endure you because I must." These eyes tortured Billy, she felt as if she had never been so looked at. She forced herself to look away from those eyes, and to listen to Ladislas Worsky, who continued his conversation with ardor. Now he was speaking of literature:

"Bourget, oh yes, of course very fine, but he tries to analyze the female heart, like sticking butterflies on pins, but that is just the one thing in this world that cannot be analyzed. You do not know Bourget, Countess? Ah yes, young German ladies do not read novels, they read nothing but Schiller. Well, your Schiller . . ."

Billy was grateful to him for thus entertaining her, for the hyper-elegance of his movements, for the white cuffs which he kept incessantly pulling out of his coat-sleeves, and for the slender, feminine, beringed hands. All this put something familiar, something homelike into this alien, hostile environment. Billy answered, laughed a little, endeavored to act as if she were sitting on the porch at Kadullen, even imitated a little the lady-of-the-world manners of her sister Lisa. The champagne was brought.

"There, a different expression, if you please, brother," cried Ladislas to Boris, pouring out the wine. "But he is always that way," turning to Billy, "*je connais mon* Boris. If something alters his program, his good humor is gone: he always used to spoil half of every Sunday for us with his bad humor, only because the next day was Monday. Well, that couldn't be helped. In our senior year we had a comrade named Andreijsky, you remember, Boris, a mad, merry fellow. All of a sudden he shoots himself. Why? There was talk of sickness and such things. No, I know he shot himself because the vacation was over, simply because the vacation was over, for he hated school like sin. Boris is just like that too."

"I *beg* your pardon," remarked Boris.

"There, there," said Ladislas, "don't be vexed, brother, you have no cause for it. Tomorrow morning the bridge

will be fixed again, and here you are in safety, in the most charming society, the happiest of men: so let us clink glasses, to your health, Countess! to the fulfilment of all wishes!"

They clinked glasses. Boris smiled faintly, and that stimulated Ladislas. "That's right, old boy. You see, Countess, I am such a harmless fellow that when I see somebody else happy it is like an intoxication to me. I never experience anything, but I feel as if this were my adventure, as if you and I, well, all one—" He sprang up from his chair, seized his glass, and began to sing:

> Champagne, when thou dost
> Set our blood whirling, etc.

He sang in a pleasant baritone and with theatrical flourishes. The Jew cried "bravo" and clapped softly. The swarm of Jewish children again appeared in the doorway, and looked into the room out of large, piercing eyes. Boris and Billy listened smiling, and only the face of the Jewess remained impassive, looking with weary scorn at the three yonder by the table.

The light-hearted strains of Mozart's melody filled the room as it were with something splendid and precious. Boris rocked lightly on his chair, beat time on the table with his fingers, and when Ladislas had finished he nodded and said, "Yes, yes, brother, that was the right choice."

"Don't you say so?" cried Ladislas. He was so overjoyed at the effect of his song that he embraced Boris and kissed him on both cheeks. Then he again sat down at the table and filled the glasses. "Permit me, Countess," he said, "to kiss your hand: I am so happy to be permitted to share this happiness here."

Boris laughed a little compassionately. "That was always your forte, my good Ladislas. Sharing. Do you remember how you were forbidden wine for a time as a student, and still were always drunk on your soda-water sooner than we on our wine, out of sheer sympathy? You were born to be happy by proxy."

"Bravo," cried Ladislas, "*un mot charmant.* You are beginning to be witty again, thank heaven, and you have every reason to,—any one that stands like you on the high end of the see-saw, nor stands alone—quite the contrary."

Boris grew serious again. "All very well, but perhaps we must talk business a little, after all."

But Ladislas was outraged. "Mercy, brother! Why should we talk business? Why should we bore the Countess that way? And what is to be said?—everything is arranged, and everything will go smoothly; no, I know something better, we'll have a little game, here are some cards, I brought them with me. You play, Countess, do you not? Any game at all."

No, Billy played no games, but she would look on; she begged the gentlemen to play. She leaned back against the sofa, the over-heated air and the wine making her head heavy, making her sleepy and quiet; Ladislas' "everything will go smoothly" rang agreeably in her ears. Of course, if only she could sleep now.

"Then a bit of écarté," said Ladislas, shuffling the cards. "You see, Countess, I am very fond of cards. Why? Because card-games are symbolic. Cut, Boris, please."

Billy could not help it, she put her hand to her mouth and yawned.

"You are weary, child," said Boris, "lie down a while."

"To be sure," cried Ladislas, "everything has been provided for." He jumped up and opened the door to a side room: "At your pleasure. But first, Countess, permit me to take leave of you: I shall ride away again at once, for I must be at home early, so that my mother shall find no traces of my nocturnal adventure." He kissed Billy's hand: "I thank you, Countess, for the happiness of these hours." There was so much feeling in his words that Billy was almost touched.

In the side room a candle was burning dimly on a commode. White and gilt china vases stood there full of paper roses, and on the wall hung a Jewish kissing-tablet. But

most of the space in the room was taken up by two enormous beds, on which mountains of feather-beds towered high in red cotton cases.

"Yes, lie down," said Boris, brushing his hand across Billy's hair, "Oh Billy, if you would feel as I do."

"Why do you say that I don't," answered Billy a trifle vexed, "that is unkind."

"No, no, I am not unkind," said Boris, "sleep now, I must discuss a number of things with Ladislas."

Billy lay down on the bed and Boris went out. She heard the two young men talking outside; at first they seemed to be playing cards, then they whispered eagerly in the Polish language, rapidly and with many hissing sounds. Billy closed her eyes and lay there motionless, wishing to sleep, but it seemed to her as if something stood beside her, something threatening that was trying to steal up on her, and it seemed as if she must wake, as if she must be on her guard. Again she opened her eyes: the candle-flame was lightly stirred by a draught, somewhere in the house a child was whimpering,—a soft, unspeakably mournful sound,—and round about her lay the red feather-beds with their disagreeable voluptuous swellings, exhaling a sweetish odor of dust. They cast great shadows on the wall, and the round soft shapes quivered gently. Billy shook in boundless disgust: why was she here, what had she to do here? Ah yes, she loved Boris, that was it. Well, how had that been?—could she not feel it again, that hot sensation of compassion and longing which changed everything in her, gave her courage for all possibilities, and made the utterly impossible a matter of course. Even for that she was too tired now. She wanted to sleep now—somewhere where it would be quiet and secure and clean. She closed her eyes again, so as not to see this room, and tried to think of home, but these thoughts also gave her no rest, but pained her. So she wished to think of something quite peaceful, something that could make no reproaches: of the furniture in the sun-parlor, standing in the darkness

under their white cotton covers, or of the great bouquets of flowers which were withering there in the vases, and showering their petals on the table with a very soft rustle. Yes, she would think of those, only of those things.

Yet she must have slept a little after all, for as she now started up it seemed to her as if she had been away somewhere where she was quite safe and where she heard familiar voices, and now she was again falling abruptly into this alien dream. It was still here, this room with the stuffy air, the walls with the gently quivering shadows, and the soft red cushions sat round about her waiting, as if they were still present and must be continued in her dreams. And then some one else stood there before the bed, quite motionless. It was Boris, but he too strangely alien and uncanny. The flickering light of the candle sent shadows driving across his face, and it seemed as if it were being distorted and only the dark specks of eyes were unswervingly fixed on her. Weary and discouraged Billy leaned back on the pillows and closed her eyes.

"What has happened," she said quite softly.

"Nothing has happened," answered Boris similarly.

"Is he gone?" queried Billy further.

"Yes, Ladislas is gone."

"Why do you stand there so?"

When Boris did not answer, Billy repeated the question in a whimpering, wailing tone. Then she heard him sink down beside the bed. He flung his arms about her, she felt his face lying cold and heavy on her breast, and felt a strange quiver shake his body, as if he were weeping.

"Didn't you say everything would be all right?" said Billy, and again her voice sounded tearful and vexed. "Why don't you speak? I don't know anything, I thought I must be with you, and that is why I went with you. Didn't you say everything would be all right?"

Boris clung more tightly to Billy's arm and pulled himself up; the upper part of his body rested on her, his face quite close to hers, and now he kissed her with dry hungry lips.

"Yes," he whispered, "everything will be well if you but wish it so. But I am so terribly afraid of one thing . . ."

"You are afraid too," replied Billy dully, "well, then—"

"No, listen," continued Boris, and his whispers became strangely hot and passionate, "if you but will. I am afraid of tomorrow, when it grows gray and bright and we must do something and must be burdened with care, and people will come and everything will be so ugly, the others and we, and our love,—O Billy, I have never been able to endure the first morning after such a happiness—"

"Why, we can't help the morning's coming," said Billy, still in her vexed tone.

"Oh yes, we can," said Boris breathless with emotion, and his hands closed around Billy's shoulders so tightly that it hurt her. "We are together, aren't we?—and we can be so happy, so happy, that we shall not wish to see another morning. That we can do. You will see. Come, you and I, and then nothing but dying will be endurable." He stammered this, bent down quite close to her, his face pale and ominous, and his hands pulling feverishly at Billy's dress.

"Why, how can we die?" responded Billy wearily.

"How—is all one," answered Boris impatiently, "you will see, we cannot go on living then."

Billy opened her eyes and looked at Boris keenly and anxiously. "Have you that terrible little revolver that you showed me in the garden at home, and that you said was your friend?" she asked.

"Yes, yes, but why speak of it," replied Boris impatiently, "we are thinking only of ourselves now, of our happiness. Will you, tell me! We are together, each beside the other, and there is nothing here but us, and we had rather die than let anything else come near us."

Billy raised herself a trifle, and pushed Boris's hands, which were ardently passing over her body, away from

her like something irksome. Her eyes grew wide and bright with fear, but her lips quivered as in a mocking and slightly contemptuous smile: "Be happy — here among these ugly red cushions. Oh, please leave me now. You — you are like the rest of the things here, I am afraid of you too!"

Boris released Billy and raised himself up. Now he knelt beside the bed, dropped his arms limply, and gnawed at his under lip. His face wore an expression of grieved disappointment. Billy again leaned back on the pillows, turned her face to the wall, and closed her eyes. Motionless she lay there like a frightened child and listened intently for the slightest sound.

Boris was silent for a time, but once he said, "Why Billy," and this was once more the voice she knew; something in it breathed upon her like the odorous exhalation of the garden at home, and the Boris she knew and the Billy she knew, and their love — all this was present again for a moment. She felt like turning around, but she only closed her eyes the tighter, knowing that if she opened them everything would be gone in spite of herself. She heard herself say, with a sullen, superior air, "Die? — no, certainly not. If that is all you can think of!"

Boris was silent again, and Billy waited in anxious suspense. Then she heard him get up, take a few steps, murmuring to himself, "Well, that's another thing, nothing to be done," and then walked slowly and hesitatingly from the room. She could hear that he merely pulled the door to, and that he walked up and down in the adjoining room, stood still, poured something into a glass, and then walked up and down again. She listened attentively to the soft, restless creaking of those steps, listening with that agonizing wakefulness with which we follow something that threatens us, that is about to attack us. For this sound grew strangely expressive. Billy thought she could hear in it quick, angry words, a voice that discontentedly muttered abusive epithets to itself. Then when the rhythm of

this voice changed, Billy held her breath with agitation. "Now he is walking on tiptoe," she thought, "now he is approaching the door." Boris cautiously reëntered the room and stood still at the foot of the bed. She heard distinctly the faint clink of the charm on his watch-chain, then came utter stillness. Billy did not budge, but waited with the resignation we feel in dreams, upon which we unconsciously base the hope that waking will come and free us from the events of the dream.

Boris began to speak in a hollow, weary voice: "Of course you are not asleep. You are trying to deceive me. Do not let me disturb you, I pray! I never ask a second time. Either people understand me or they do not. You do not understand me: very well, very well, it is always the same story. You women never do understand." He paused and it was strange enough to see how the girlish face with the closed eyes and the tightly clenched lips flushed and paled. "All that surprises me," continued Boris, "is that you came here at all. To be proper, we do not need to come here. Yes, but that is always the way: we think that together we stand on a very high plane, high above everything small and foolish; we think that the great moment is coming now, for which we have been waiting a lifetime; and then it comes to naught again, one is alone after all, and you, you have stayed down below there in the world of — of — Madame Bonnechose."

He was silent again, and Billy thought: "Was he laughing then?" There had been something in his voice that sounded like that. She pressed her eyelids more tightly together; not for the world would she have seen that sad and proud smile of which she had always been afraid, even at moments when she loved Boris most ardently. Boris took a few steps, then stood still again: "Only load myself with responsibility, and have nothing for it? — no thanks! Out of what could have been very beautiful and great you make something ugly and silly. That's a game I won't play. I don't understand being ridiculous, we Poles

have no talent for that." Again he paced awhile, again he waited; yes, he was waiting, Billy knew he was, but not for a moment did the thought come to her that she might open her eyes, speak to him, or call him back: she had but one idea, to lie quite still and not move, then perhaps this too would pass. Boris was now at the door; she heard the soft creaking of the rusty hinges, and on the threshold he stopped to say in a voice that sounded strangely alien and altered, the voice of a man who is all alone somewhere or other, and who is speaking to himself sadly and hopelessly, "No, not that, I am so tired of having nothing but misunderstandings to live for." He went out and pulled the door to again, and Billy heard him stride to and fro in the adjoining room, and then fling himself on the old cracking sofa.

The thunderstorm was over, and a fine rain trickled down quietly and evenly, beating quite gently on the window-panes. Billy still lay there very quietly. Why should she move? Why should she open her eyes? Round about her was nothing that belonged to her, nothing that partook of her, nothing that she felt to be Life. A feeling of aloneness, never before experienced, took physical hold upon her, something that made her ill, that chilled her.

Boris had spoken in his strangely altered voice of being happy and dying. These words she had heard once before, at home among the currant bushes, but there it had had a different sound, there it had sounded sad and sultry and sweet; she had understood it there, and it seemed to her to be something possible and easy, if Boris wished it. But to die—here, that was incomprehensible and repulsive like everything else here: for that was just the result of this terribly puzzling feeling of loneliness which was icily creeping over her. She must lie here, and life was infinitely far away; she saw it like a spot quite yellow with sunshine, quite gay with autumn flowers, and familiar figures were passing through this sunshine: before the wash-house knelt the washwoman with her white apron, at the bed of

carnations knelt the gardener with his yellow straw hat, and under the pear-tree stood her father, drawing the scent of the early pears and the plums into his long white nose.

Billy saw this, felt it, smelt it, and yet all of it was living without her: or rather, she herself was there, and she could see herself, also her love was there, Boris, and everything, but she could not cross over to join herself there. Billy raised herself, her eyes wide open, her mouth very red against the white face, and about her lips the resolute, obstinate lines which they were wont to assume when Billy felt that she must have something for which she longed.

She climbed softly out of the bed, crept to the unclosed door and peeped through the crack. Boris was lying asleep on the sofa. His tangled hair hung down on his forehead, and his pale face wore the grief-stricken and at the same time helpless expression with which sound sleep overspreads a face. On the table stood the champagne bottle and a half-emptied glass. The candle had burned very low, and the only sound in the room was a faint moaning that issued from Boris's half-open mouth, wailing and then changing to short, high-pitched, and as it were mocking sounds. Billy cautiously pulled the door shut. Then she bustled about, took her cloak and hat, went to the window, and opened it. The draught put out the candle; outside it still seemed dark, the rain was whispering in the gloom, the great pines were rustling, a deep, loud rustle, a glorious untrammeled breath from a breast of infinite capacity, and Billy too had to breathe, quite deeply, before she swung herself upon the window-sill and jumped out.

The wind drove the rain into her face and took her breath. One moment she stood there, bending forward slightly, like one who stands in the ocean waiting for a wave to break over him. Then she ran into the darkness with firm, obstinate steps. On the wet road lay a dull, dead light. Billy followed it. Water leaped up against her legs with a splash when she stepped into the puddles, and

from her hat tiny cold rivulets trickled down inside the collar of her cloak. Everything was against her, everything that whispered, gurgled, snickered, and murmured round about her, was hostile. It was frightful, and she was frightened, but she had expected nothing else and she simply had to advance. And in doing so she found in herself something that she had never known there before, she found in herself the agitating feeling of angry watchfulness and as it were sullen curiosity, which are of the essence of courage. Thinking was impossible, she merely had to be on her guard. So she rushed on. The road now grew dark. The great pines murmured about her quite near at hand, and at times a wet branch struck at her or tried to catch her, whereupon she would thrust it from her fiercely and pugnaciously. A vast, dreamy resignation toward the lurking Unknown made her almost apathetic. At the same time it was queer enough that through all this time an image stood before her, trying to be felt and seen. She saw herself clearly as if she were walking by her own side: the slender figure in the brown rain-coat, the wet hat on her head, bending forward slightly and running along the unfamiliar black roads as resistlessly and unconsciously as a bullet hurled by a powerful hand, forward over the roots that treacherously placed themselves in her way, under the branches that tried to hold her fast and drenched her with water, past great dusky birds that whirred across the road, sending terrifying, wailing notes into the night. But that had to be, life outside the garden-gates of Kadullen was like that, and only thus could you fight your way back to those garden-gates. And it seemed to Billy as if she could feel that here in the gloomy world about her many such solitary figures were running down black roads, quickly, quickly. She felt so strongly the presence of these nocturnal comrades that they were uncanny and yet a trifle consoling to her. The road grew steadily clearer and more shiny, trees and bushes now stood out distinctly in a gray light, night-ravens flapped their wings: day was coming. But Billy

did not look up. Though it was frightful to dream this dream, yet she was afraid to wake out of it. She knew that if she did, this fever of courage and of thoughtless resignation would forsake her, and that she would then have no strength left. Her head bowed low over the road, she rushed on; now she was in the midst of a white mist, then again she would be walking on moss like red and green velvet. It had grown remarkably still about her; rain and wind must have ceased. Suddenly she was walking all bathed in a ruddy light. She felt this light like something that causes pain, and she narrowed her eyes and bowed her head lower. Gradually the light became golden, there was a flaming radiance and flicker everywhere, and a humming began in the air, and a rustling in the moss. Billy felt how a busy life had awakened about her, and she walked faster: it was like a race with this Day, that was advancing so calmly and wakefully in all his glory.

How long Billy had walked this way she did not know, but it seemed an interminable time. The sun was already high in a pure blue sky and beat down pitilessly. Billy felt as if she must be carrying a very warm burden along with her, and moreover her feet grew so heavy, moving slowly and mechanically like things that did not belong to her; they were indifferent to her like everything else about her, and for her own feeling she was some strange thing that was being laboriously driven forward through the sunshine. Then suddenly, in a small forest clearing, she sank down on a mossy knoll in the glaring sun. It was delicious to stretch out her legs, to lay her back against the warm huckleberry bushes. There could be nothing nicer in life. Around the clearing stood young firs and pines, as shiny as metal, and so motionless that the drops which still hung here and there on their needles seemed frozen. Everything was motionless under this yellow light, the grass-blades, the moss-blossoms, and the little blue butterflies, and a bumble-bee crawled into the bell of a bennet and hung there as if enchanted. In the thicket a fox drew near, his

head lowered to sniff the ground, and suddenly he too stood still without stirring a muscle and stared into space, his eyes transparent as green glass, spell-bound by the overpowering silence of the hour.

Billy sat there, and on her too was the burden of this motionlessness which was so soothing, this delicious intoxication of light, of silence, and of all the hot odors which the leaves, the pine-needles, and the great sun-basking mushrooms exhaled. She too stared into space, feeling how her eyes also grew as glassy bright as the eyes of yonder fox, and how everything in her merely existed to drink in the sunlit stillness. Now the cry of the jay rang out excitedly, as if he would waken some one whether or no. The fox was gone, and Billy also started up; then she leaned back, lifted her arms, stretched herself, and screwed up her face as if to cry. Something very beautiful was over. Painfully she got up: what was the use, she must go on in any case.

A wide forest road, covered with short grass, led her through a young fir-nursery, and when the road took a turn, a bit of heath lay before Billy, in the midst of which stood some cottages, standing there with their golden-brown timbers and silver-gray roofs like tiny, gleaming caskets on the red-blooming heath. Over there a cow was lowing in long-drawn, sleepy tones; a cock crowed; smoke rose straight from the chimney into the sky. Billy stopped short; all this moved her so powerfully, she did not know why; her eyes grew moist, and yet she could not but smile. She went straight toward the house; a low lattice fence inclosed a garden which Billy entered through the half open gate. Long beds of vegetables, gooseberry bushes. Here and there blue flowering chicory and dark red poppies laid flaming spots of color on the uniform brightness of the midday light. Beehives stood around everywhere. Before one of these a man was kneeling, busied with the bees. Billy went up to him; doubtless he heard the gravel crunch under her feet, and he raised his head: a small old

face, looking as if it had been compressed in an upward direction, gazed at Billy calmly out of dull, very light blue eyes.

"Good morning," said Billy.

"Good morning," answered the man, holding his hands out cautiously before him, for they were thickly covered with bees as with golden-yellow velvet gloves. As Billy said nothing, he turned to his hive again.

"Am I far from Kadullen?" Billy began again.

"Three hours' walk," answered the man without looking up.

Again both were silent. The strong scent of the pot-herbs in the garden-beds, the sourish smell of the honey, the faint buzzing of the bees, all this enveloped Billy like boundless, delicious indolence. "To rest here," thought she.

"May I sit here?" she asked, pointing to a wheelbarrow which lay upturned on the gravel path. The old man merely nodded, as he cautiously stripped the bees from his hands, and Billy sat down, stretched out her feet, let her arms hang heavily, and sighed deeply: this was all she needed. Oh, it wasn't so hard to live, after all.

"You're the young lady at Kadullen?" the old man finally said again, "I often go there with honey. S'pose you're wet, hey?"

"Yes."

"S'pose you've been out in the rain during the night, and now I s'pose you want to go home?"

Yes, Billy wanted to go home. The old man took off his straw hat and thoughtfully rubbed his hand over his bald, shiny pate. "We could hitch up," he said. Then he turned toward the other side and cried, "Lina!" Over there before the little stable a red cow was standing, and in front of her squatted a girl in a blue linen dress, milking her. The girl got up slowly and a little laboriously, stood there a moment, screwed up her face at the sunlight, looked

crossly over at Billy, and wiped her big red hands on her white apron.

"Come on," said the old man.

So Lina came slowly along the vegetable beds; on the big, stout body perched a small head, with a puffy-cheeked, very heated childish face under a heavy mass of oily brown hair. She still kept her hands on her apron, as if wishing to conceal the fact that she was pregnant. She stopped short before Billy and asked ill-humoredly, "What is it, father?"

"Take the young lady in with you," said the father, "put some dry clothes on her, and give her something to eat; afterward, young lady, we'll drive on."

Lina turned and strode toward the house.

Billy got up to follow her, when the old man looked slyly at the two with a sidelong glance, pointed at his daughter with his thumb and said, "She's lost her good name too." Lina looked back at Billy, passed the back of her hand across her eyes, and smiled faintly.

The living room into which Billy was conducted must have been freshly calcimined, for it seemed so surprisingly, glaringly white. The sunshine was so strangely heavy and honey-yellow as it rested on the red and white chintz covers of the furniture and the pine boards of the floor. Then, too, there was an eager, loud medley of bird-voices trying to outsing each other, for all over the ceiling and at the window hung canaries in cages; there were perhaps ten or twelve, and the little creatures, excited by the light, trilled as if they were intoxicated by their own singing.

"Oh, the birds," said Billy surprised.

"Them!" said Lina peevishly, "they yelp all day long."

Billy had to sit down on the sofa, and Lina began to undress her. She drew off her shoes, then her stockings. "The little feet," she murmured, "I can hold one of 'em in my hand like a little bird." She was quite absorbed in her task, and talked to herself like a child playing quietly in a corner with its doll. "The lovely underwear, and wet

through and through, and we have a skin like silk, there, there, and now comes the shirt, brand new it is, I made it for my wedding."

"For your wedding?" asked Billy, who obeyed mechanically the big, careful hands.

"The wedding, well, that's all up now anyhow," said Lina, bustling back and forth between her chests and Billy. "There, this dress here, it's a bit tight for me, for the young lady it'll be all right. Nope, it's too big after all, we'll have to pin it together," and the two girls began to laugh at the loose dress, quite loudly, quite helplessly. Lina sat down, slapped her knees, and held her sides. The canaries tried to outsing the laughter of the girls. Now Billy was ready. She asked for a mirror, surveyed herself attentively, then put away the mirror satisfied and said, "Very good, your clothes are as soothing as smelling-salts."

Lina went out to prepare something to eat, and Billy leaned back on the sofa and closed her eyes. Yes, she really felt as if she had put away with her clothes the cares and unrest of the former Billy. With the dotted blue and white linen dress, with the big collar and the coarse shirt that scratched her skin, it seemed as if she had imbibed something of the carefree, almost shameless peacefulness with which Lina had lazily and indolently moved her body, distorted by motherhood, along the vegetable beds of the garden.

Now Lina brought milk, a shiny, brown loaf, and a great deal of honey. Billy began to eat; at first with ravenous hunger, then slowly with enjoyment, almost with devotion: she could not remember ever having had anything taste so good to her.

When she was satisfied, she rested her arms heavily on the table. In these unwonted clothes she had an impulse to go through motions which were otherwise never characteristic of her, which perhaps were Lina's. Her cheeks were flushed again, her eyes shining, and impatience for

life warmed her blood. Lina sat facing her, her hands laid flat on her knees, and looked at her steadily and patiently out of her small blue eyes.

"I think," remarked Billy, "we will go and see the cow, the chickens, and the bees now."

That was it: in this comical blue dress she felt like going about the farm outside; yes, she was convinced that she would be able to walk along between the vegetable beds quite as lazily and cheerfully as Lina. But when she stood up she felt that her legs were stiff and pained her.

"Oh, no, let us stay here," she said, "and let us talk instead."

But the calm of the big, heated girl facing her made her impatient. Could one not poke up this calm, as the child Billy had poked up the small, quiet ant-hills, so that they immediately teemed with excited life. "Are you not afraid?" asked Billy suddenly.

"Afraid?" answered Lina, "why? Oh, I see, you mean about that; naw, what is there to be afraid of?"

"But some die of it," Billy went on probing.

Lina drew the back of her hand across her eyes and smiled faintly. "Yes, some die." The two girls were silent for a time, listening to the clamor of the canaries. Then Lina began to ask in her deep, somewhat singing voice, "And yours is gone too?"

Billy blushed. "Yes, gone," she murmured uncertainly.

Lina sighed. "Yes," she said, "men are a cross, they always go away. That's what happens to all of us."

Billy was silent, but it was like security and peace to her, this "us" which placed her in the ranks of the girls who with calmness and strength take the burden of life upon them.

The rumble of a wagon was heard outside. Immediately thereafter the old man appeared in the door with a whip in his hand, saying, "We can start now, young lady." Billy had to put on a very large yellow straw hat, and then they drove away.

The little wagon rattled violently, the heavy white horse trotted along imperturbably, patiently shaking off the gadflies that circled about him. The little bells fastened to his harness tinkled a sleepily monotonous tune. For a time the wagon continued to roll through the fir nursery as between quiet blue walls, then the forest came to an end, and the high road was before them and broad fields. Over all of it lay a hot, pale yellow dust-film. The countryside seemed to Billy so awesomely bare. "We see no people," she said.

The old man began to laugh softly and long. "'Cause it's Sunday. Ah yes, when we go walking by night we don't know what day it is any more, but that's the way with girls; Lina's got that far too."

"Can't he marry her?" asked Billy timidly.

The old man struck angrily at his white horse. "Marry? Marry who? Where *is* the man to marry? Where *is* our handsome machinist at the saw-mill? 'Cause he's got yellow cat's-eyes, they all run after him. Anna at the water-mill has come to it too now. Ye-ep, you can't stop it; soon as spring comes, the young hussies are out o' nights, as restless as the bees before a thunderstorm, and you can beat 'em, you can tie 'em, but in a jiffy — off they put. Now at this time o' year it don't happen so often," added the old man with a sidelong glance at Billy.

She smiled. "Yes," she thought, "in a spring night, when we grow as restless as the bees before a thunderstorm, then maybe there is this Being-happy and this Dying, that Boris was talking about, but there" — she shrank and shuddered: she did not even wish to think of it, she still had a long ride before her, and later she would think it all over. Good, good, but no thinking now, just listen to the sleepy tinkle of the little bells.

Gradually however the region became more familiar, here and there stood a farmer in Sunday coat among his fields, whose face Billy recalled, and finally Kadullen rose in the distance between the great trees of the park; a cool green spot in the sun-yellow land.

Billy drew herself up; she suddenly became quite wakeful; it was almost torturing, how abruptly all her dream world fell away from her and the former Billy was present once more with the responsibility for what she had done, with the fear and shame before all those people yonder. She saw distinctly Marion's eyes, Aunt Betty's helpless little face, and her father's severe white nose. They had probably found the slip of paper she had left behind. She tried to think what was on it. "I am with him." Lord, how stupid that sounded! And now they were coming closer and closer to the house. If only she could get to her room unnoticed by way of the little staircase: no one would recognize her in Lina's clothes, and once upstairs in her room she would lock the door and let nobody in and sleep — sleep. Perhaps that would take some burden from her; perhaps when she then awoke everything would be different, everything better.

"Oh please," she said, "we'll stop at the little gate in the park wall over there."

The old man nodded indifferently, turned into the side road, and stopped before the small gate in the park wall. When Billy had got out, she stood still a moment and said hesitantly: "I suppose I must pay."

"'s all right," answered the old man with a bad grace, "I'm going to deliver some honey in the courtyard anyway."

"But not right away," pleaded Billy.

"I know, I know the game," murmured the old man, "needn't tell me."

Billy disappeared behind the gate. Cautiously she hurried up the little paths: everything was silent and unpeopled, and the house stood there as if asleep, with lowered blinds. Cautiously Billy approached the back stairs. From the windows of the servants' quarters resounded the long-drawn notes of a hymn: the servants were having their Sunday worship. Before the washhouse stood the washwoman, putting her hand to her eyes and looking

out into the sunshine. Where had Billy just seen that? Oh yes, over yonder in her dream. Now she softly ran up the stairs, now she was in her room. Here too everything had waited for her unchanged, and the familiar scent of the room, the familiar light, all moved her so deeply that tears streamed down her face without effort or pain. She locked the door, hastily pulled off her clothes, and crept into her bed. Tears and sleep she craved, nothing else. Then when she awoke, simply to belong again to all this that had waited here for her so unchanged, so quietly and proudly.

Strange enough was the Sunday that had broken upon Kadullen. The news of Billy's return home spread quickly. The washwoman had told the butler, the butler reported it to Countess Betty, and then the old beekeeper came into the servants' room and told his story. He was taken to the Count and there cross-examined; but to no avail, for the affair remained as incomprehensible as before. Why had she gone away? What had happened? Marion was sent up to Billy's room, but reported that Billy would admit no one and wished to sleep. Full of trouble Countess Betty and Madame Bonnechose sat on the garden-steps beside Lisa, who had stretched herself out on a reclining chair, for she felt very weak from all these excitements. The two old ladies were silent: what should they say? — they no longer understood *la chère jeunesse.* Only Madame Bonnechose murmured from time to time, "*C'est incompréhensible.*" Countess Betty nodded, but Lisa would smile dreamily and say, "Understand? — Oh, I can understand it all."

"*Mais chère* little Lisa, *dites-nous donc, ce que vous savez,*" urged Madame Bonnechose.

Lisa shook her head. "There are things which we understand and yet for which there are no words. When I stood on the plain of Marathon with Katakasianopulos that time, it seemed to me as if I distinctly understood all the pain that was to come upon us, but express it — that I could not have done."

"Ah, dear child," said Countess Betty dejectedly, "that will not help us now."

Marion came and reported once more that in Billy's room everything was quite still.

"Oh dear, oh dear," sighed Countess Betty; she could not calmly sit still, so she rose and went over to see her brother.

Count Hamilcar lay in his room on the sofa; he was keeping his eyes shut, his face was strangely sallow, and the features seemed sharper and more pointed than usual. When his sister came to a stop before him, he opened his eyes and looked at her with a glance which had the indifference of a man who to be sure surveys us, but whose thoughts and dreams are very far from us.

"Still no certainty," said Countess Betty whimperingly. "She admits nobody, saying she wants to sleep."

"Let her sleep," answered the count.

"Yes, but she might let us in," wailed the old lady further, "what *is* all this? all these affairs? the whole house is whispering. The Professor's family will leave today and carry the story all over the country, and you, Hamilcar, you don't say anything either."

The count raised himself slightly. "No, Betty," he said, "I say nothing, because I know nothing. We cannot prevent others from talking, but we ought not to speak until there is need for it. Let the child sleep, then she shall tell you everything, and then, Betty, I shall say my say too. Will it soon be time for breakfast?"

"Oh, Hamilcar," replied Countess Betty intimidated, "you surely won't come to breakfast, you are so unstrung."

The count laid his finger along his nose and said sharply, "I shall come, and I hope it will be on time as usual. Also I did not hear you sing a hymn: did you not have the accustomed worship?"

"No, we were so excited, you see," the old lady excused herself, but the count was dissatisfied.

"You are wrong, Betty, have your worship as you do every Sunday; but if I may request it, no reference to these happenings in the Bible reading or in the prayer, just ordinary devotions. It is not our fault that something has come in here which does not belong to us, but there is no reason why we should surrender to it: we insist on our way, and that ends it."

Wearily the count leaned back and shut his eyes; his sister looked at him with alarm. "What ails you, Hamilcar?" she asked, "you are so pale."

The count motioned impatiently with his hand. "I shall manage," he said, "circulation and heart-beat simply won't listen to us, and the only trouble is that they are forever meddling with our affairs. There is an error here in the contract that we call our life. But for the rest, it is old age, Betty, just that, and that is after all comprehensible."

Countess Betty softly left the room, and outside she said to Madame Bonnechose, much troubled, "*Chère amie*, my brother requires of us that we have devotions; there is nothing to be done, so please call the chamber-maids and the butler, *ô ma chère, il est terriblement philosophe.*"

Life at Kadullen did not surrender; there were devotions, Count Hamilcar appeared at breakfast, pale and weary, but his conversation with the Professor did not falter. They spoke of the yellow race, and, as if even that were not sufficiently remote, of the Bismarck Archipelago. Embarrassed silence burdened the remaining company. Egon's and Moritz's places were vacant, for at the news of Billy's disappearance they had ridden away and were not back yet. Lisa rejected all food, and looked out and away over the heads of the breakfasters with her beautiful eyes. "Today Lisa is altogether in 'Marathon,'" Bob whispered to Erika. Even Mr. Post and Miss Demme wore a serious, even somewhat proudly repellent mien. Mr. Post had said to Miss Demme before breakfast, "It is plain to see that this so-called aristocratic culture cannot hold its

ground: there is much that is rotten at the core after all." Whereupon Miss Demme, shaking her short curls, had answered, " There is simply a lack of inward freedom."

After breakfast the professorial family drove away, taking a hasty and over-affectionate farewell. Countess Betty had tears in her eyes.

" I felt," she said later, " as if Billy had died and they had just paid a visit of condolence."

Then came the afternoon hours with the steady brightness of the mid-summer day, with the quiet flaming of the bright colors in the garden-beds, the Sunday lack of happenings, the troubled sitting-together-and-waiting.

" Oh dear, if you only know what you were waiting for," sighed Countess Betty.

But upstairs behind the locked door lay the poor puzzle, and before the door stood Marion, her head leaning against it, her eyes too large for the small yellow face.

Once the quiet was disturbed by the hurrying hoof-beats of a horse; a rider galloped into the courtyard, dismounted and carried a letter in to Count Hamilcar, then rode away again, and once more Sunday stillness rested on the house.

" Now what is this new thing," wailed Countess Betty, " Hamilcar doesn't say anything either; every one sits like a sphinx, guarding his own secret."

And Lisa in her reclining chair said, lost in thought, " Even when they go and leave us they have something that pleads for help, as if they were trying to tell us: help me against myself."

" *Qui? monsieur Boris?* " asked Madame Bonnechose.

" No," replied Lisa, " Katakasianopulos."

" *Ah, ma chère, maintenant il ne s'agit pas de monsieur de Katakasianopulos,*" said Madame Bonnechose with vexation.

At last after dinner, when the sun was already shining red above the rim of the forest, the news spread, " Marion is in Billy's room."

Billy had slept very soundly. Now she was lying on her bed, her hands clasped behind her neck, her cheeks reddened, her eyes wonderfully bright. She looked searchingly up at Marion, who stood before her and gazed anxiously at her.

"First of all," said Billy, "don't look at me as if I had died. You have eyes that can look at a person as if he were a spider."

—"Oh Billy, that is only because you are so wonderfully beautiful this minute."

Billy smiled a little: "Oh well, that may be so; sit down and tell your story.—So you found the slip?"

"Yes."

"Of course you took it to Auntie and your mother?"

"Yes."

"What did they say?"

"Mama said, '*la pauvre petite, elle est perdue.*'"

"Ah, she said *perdue.* Do go on." Marion was ready to cry. "Why, I don't know; Auntie went in to see your father. Your cousins rode away to look for you, and Moritz said, 'If I only had that Pole in reach of my pistol.' I made camomile tea for Auntie and Mama."

"Marion, Marion," Billy interrupted, "you're not much on story-telling."

"No," said Marion, "you know you are to do the telling."

Billy grew serious: "Oh, I see, that is what they sent you here for; very well. Pull down the shades and sit down by the window and don't look at me." She shut her eyes and her face took on a tortured expression. "I went away in the night, you know; I had to. And it was quite easy. I could not let him go away alone and insulted, I should have died for pity. And then we rode, and it rained and lightened, and finally we couldn't go any farther. We went into a little inn: one of Boris's friends was there, and an old Jew, and a Jewess sat there without moving and looked at me as people sometimes look at us in frightful

dreams. Then we ate something and drank champagne, Boris's friend sang and the two men played cards; but that was when it began, everything grew different then, and quite sad, and I didn't understand any more why I was there. I went into the adjoining room and lay down on the bed. Everything smelled of dust and very bad perfume; there were terrible red cushions, a child cried somewhere, and everything was horribly ugly and sad. I never thought anything could be so ugly. Boris came in. He was quite strange too. Here among the barberries he had talked before about being happy and dying, but there, there it sounded awful. And he was angry and went out and I pretended to sleep. Tell me, Marion, could you love and be tragic, or be happy and die, when one of the fat green caterpillars that we are so afraid of falls on top of you and crawls over you and you can't pull it off you and it keeps on crawling over you? See, that is the way everything was there, everything. When all was still and Boris was sleeping, I jumped out of the window and ran and ran."

"Don't you love him any more?" asked a timid voice from the window-niche.

Billy was silent a moment, then she cried passionately, "Marion, don't ask such questions. Yes, probably — of course I shall love him again, here. But I will not talk about it any more, and they are not to torment me. Go, tell them what you like, but for today I wish to be left in peace. Auntie can come and sit beside my bed, but she mustn't ask me anything, or mustn't talk about disagreeable things; she can tell about her youth if she likes."

Billy turned her face to the wall, and Marion stole softly out of the room.

Twilight was already falling when Countess Betty timidly entered her brother's room. Count Hamilcar was sitting on his sofa, somewhat shrunken, and was looking out of the window. "Well, Betty," he said without looking up.

The old lady stood still before him, supporting herself by her hands on the back of a chair; the pale face of her

LITTLE CURIOSITY

JULIUS EXTER

brother alarmed her, it looked so unapproachably angry, as if he were looking down at something he despised there outside the window.

"Well?" he said again.

"She has told Marion about it," began Countess Betty, and she narrated in a low, faltering voice, with something queerly helpless in it. "The poor child," she finished, "all alone in the night, what she suffered, the wicked fellow! What do you say, Hamilcar?"

"I?" he said, turning toward his sister. His words issued now with extreme clearness, sharp and nasal. "I say, Betty: What sort of beings are we rearing here?—why, they cannot live. Why, we simply cannot intrust to them the thing that we call life. A housemaid who steals out to the stable-boy and lets him seduce her knows what she is after; but what we are bringing up is little intoxicated ghosts that tremble with longing to haunt the outside world and cannot breathe when they get out there. That is what we are rearing, Betty."

"I do not understand you, Hamilcar," said the old lady, who had grown quite pale, "she is a child, she does not know, she will forget, the others will forget, everything will come out all right. God has shielded her."

A faint flush rose into the count's pale face, and a powerful agitation made him a trifle breathless: "Our interesting gentleman has seen to it that she will not forget it, he has seen to it that this ridiculous tragedy will cling to the girl like an ugly sickness. He has deemed it proper to shoot himself yonder in the Jew's tavern—here."

He held out to his sister a piece of paper which he had been holding in his fist all the time, and which he had crumpled into a little round ball. Countess Betty took this little ball; mechanically she unfolded the paper with trembling fingers, smoothed it out, and tried to read. There were a few lines from Ladislas Worsky announcing Boris's death. Inclosed was a little slip on which Boris had written, "To Billy. Then I shall go alone. Boris."

Countess Betty let the paper drop on her knee and looked into space vacantly, almost blankly, and only when the count now burst into an angry laugh did she start up in terrible affright.

"That is a departure for you, eh?" he said, and now he spoke quickly and pantingly: "These are the people that spend their lives in standing like actors before the mirror and practising gestures for their audience. I love — how does that become me? I am unhappy, I die — how does that look, what will the others say to that? Death and life — a question of attire, and a pretty girl that loves us is also simply a part of our toilet, like a gardenia that we put into our button-hole: and we are bringing up our girls to be gardenias for such worthless fops. And then they call it Love; with that word they are fed and made drunk. A pretty estate this love and life and dying have reached, if they have come to be affairs for the nursery and for fops." He broke off, for his agitation took his breath. He leaned back wearily and shut his eyes. Countess Betty wept quietly into her handkerchief. After a pause the count began again in his quiet, slow way, "Do not cry, Betty, I lost my temper, excuse me."

Countess Betty lifted her tear-wet face to him and said beseechingly, "But she must not find it out today."

Count Hamilcar shrugged his shoulders — "Today or tomorrow, that belongs to her and to us once and for all."

Countess Betty rose, dried her eyes, and said, "How pale you are, Hamilcar, you ought to go to bed."

Again the count smiled his restrained, kind smile: "Yes, Betty, I shall go to bed. In all our distress this expedient is always left to us."

Again Billy had slept deeply and soundly. It must have been about midnight when she awoke; she felt rested and wakeful, and was hungry. Throughout the day she had crossly refused all food, now she reflected that she must eat. She resolved to go down to the housekeeper, Miss Runtze, and get something from her. Softly, so as not to

waken Marion, she dressed and went down to the lower floor to knock at the housekeeper's door. It took Miss Runtze a long time to understand who was knocking, and when she did she was greatly alarmed. "Oh dear, Countess Billy! what *is* it? another misfortune? you want something to eat? Yes, yes, that's what comes when you won't eat anything all day."

Scolding softly to herself she preceded Billy into the pantry. There some cold chicken and a little Madeira were found. Billy began to eat ravenously. As she took the glass and sipped the Madeira with puckered lips, she blinked over the brim of the glass at the housekeeper, who stood before her, the large face, heated from sleeping, closely framed by the white night-cap, the corners of the mouth drawn down severely and disapprovingly.

"Well, Runtze, what do you say to all this?" asked Billy.

"I was very sorry for it," answered the housekeeper coldly and formally.

"Why?"

Runtze turned to the wooden frame on which the sausages hung, and began to stroke one of them gently with her hand. "Why, it's this way," she said, "a countess must be like an almond that I have soaked well in hot water and slip out of its skin, beautiful and white."

Billy had once more bent over her chicken-wing. "Oh, that is it," she said as she ate, "but Bonnechose says, *cette pauvre* Runtze has had her own romance and her own unhappy love-affair."

The corners of the housekeeper's mouth were drawn down still lower and more tartly. "In our station all sorts of things can happen: we love for a while and then again we don't and are at peace. But with our mistresses it is different. If there is a hole in the cover of the old sofa down in my room, I don't care, and some time when I have time I mend it; but the company rooms upstairs must be spick and span, and that's what I look out for every morning."

"I believe he was a miller?" asked Billy in a business-like tone.

"Yes, a miller."

"Fair-haired?"

"No, red-haired."

Billy, her hunger now appeased, leaned back in her chair. "Oh, red-haired, that's very pretty sometimes, and his face powdered with flour and the red hair with it. But I am done now." She stood up. "I thank you, Runtze, your meal was very good."

"That is the main thing," said the woman, "you are in love, and then again you are not, but you always have to eat."

Billy went out, but she did not feel like going back up to her room, which was so full of terrifying dreams. She walked down the corridor to the outside door which led into the garden. It was the hour at which she had been accustomed to go about of late anyway. Even to herself she seemed ghostly and uncanny. But the garden was delicious, homelike. A bit of a moon and very bright stars were in the sky. The mist had advanced from the meadow into the garden. It was creeping over the patches of turf and the beds. The flowers looked black, standing in the white mists. A very intense joy warmed Billy's heart as she found that this familiar reality had waited here for her and that she once more belonged to all this. She walked along the gravel paths, she passed her hand over the dew-laden tops of the roses and dahlias, she ate some of the currants, she stood under the barberry bushes and breathed in the moist, earthy smell that rose out of the old box there. But as she walked thus, a more powerful agitation came over her. All these spots spoke of Boris; she saw him and felt him again, and longing for him again made her wretched and sick. Slowly she had returned to the house, now she stood before the quietly sleepy garden-facade, saw Boris standing on the porch again, or coming down the garden-paths and looking into the evening sun with his dreamy eyes, and

she again heard him speaking in his solemn, singing voice of the pain suffered for the mother-country. How could she go on living without all that? Suddenly it struck her that a kind of noiseless unrest was going through the sleeping house. There was light at Lisa's window, and behind the shades Lisa's shadow moved back and forth. Billy recognized distinctly the figure in the long nightdress, her loose hair hanging down her back. "Why doesn't she sleep," she thought, "why is she walking around?—after all it's my love-affair, not hers." But Aunt Betty's window next door was also lit up. And there was the shadow of Aunt Betty's big nightcap, too, and beside it another big nightcap. How the two nightcaps gently moved toward each other, swaying and quivering. Why weren't they sleeping, all of them? Was it on her account? And there on the other side, light there too, and behind the shades another shadow walking restlessly to and fro. Now the shadow approached the window, the shade was raised, the window opened, and Billy saw her father lean out: his hands tore open the shirt at his breast, and in the scanty moonlight his face seemed quite white, only the open mouth and eyes laying black shadows on it. So he stood there, drinking in the night air greedily and anxiously. Billy retreated behind the box-hedge. She was shivering with fear. Good heavens, what ailed them all! Was it not as if she had died and were now stealing about the house as a spirit, to see how all of them were mourning for her in there. Cautiously keeping to the shadows, she walked over to the avenue of maples. She felt impelled to look up from there at her balcony and the window of her room. On the bench facing her window some one was sitting asleep, his head drooping on his breast. It was Moritz. Billy stood still before him. The good lad, he had sat here and looked up at her window; the thought gave her the feeling of a delicious, warm shelter. Moritz grew restless, opened his eyes, and looked at her.

"Ah, you, Billy," he said, as if he had expected her.

Billy smiled at him. "Have you been sitting here, Moritz, to look up at my window?"

"Yes," answered Moritz crossly.

"That is nice," said Billy. She sat down on the bench beside him and leaned slightly against his arm. "Do you still love me?"

"Yes," said Moritz in the same cross tone, "but why should that matter to you?"

"Oh," said Billy plaintively, "it is very important, for I feel as if I had died, and when a person is very much loved, then . . . then I think he comes to life again."

Moritz was silent a moment, and when he began to speak a great agitation made his voice hesitant and awkward. "Oh Billy, if I could help you."

"How can you, Moritz?" answered Billy, and he could hear from her voice that she was weeping. "I—I—am longing so terribly for Boris." The arm against which Billy was leaning trembled slightly; it was as if its muscles tightened.

"That—" hissed Moritz between clenched teeth, "you must not think of him . . . how could he do that to you . . . he had no right to die . . . and not die that way, even if life had been twice as loathsome to him . . . a man who loves doesn't do such a thing; that was base."

For a moment it grew quite still. Moritz merely felt the girlish body lean a little more heavily on him. At last Billy began, and it sounded like the faint wail of a child: "Is he dead?"

"What, Billy, you didn't know—"

"Yes I did, I knew it, I feel now that I knew it all the time—and even over there when I came away from him." She was silent a while, and it grew so still that they heard the night-dew trickling through the leaves. Suddenly Billy raised herself, stood before Moritz white and erect, brushed the hair from her forehead, while the moonlight rested on her face, which seemed queerly pale and calm, and said in almost a matter-of-fact tone, "Will you come along, Moritz?"

"Where to, Billy?"

"I *must* go to him, you can see that; I left him once before. He can't stay there alone in that terrible room. The Jewess is looking at him and the children are standing in the door. No, I will not forsake him again; but alone through the forest again—please, Moritz, come along." She swayed slightly, propped herself on Moritz's shoulder, and then sank down quietly and heavily before him.—

Billy had been sick for a long time. Now it was a sunny September afternoon, and she was for the first time permitted to go out into the garden. On the patch of turf under the pear-tree Billy sat wrapped in shawls, her face haggard and transparently pale, and in her eyes the lazily relishing glance of the convalescent, who likes to let his eyes rest a long time upon objects. On the other grass-plot Lisa was lying in her reclining chair, and Madame Bonnechose sat beside her, knitting a red child's stocking. Countess Betty and Marion never stopped running along between the rows of dahlias to and from the house and the grass-plots. Count Hamilcar was taking his afternoon stroll. He walked slowly down the garden-path, leaning heavily on his cane; from time to time he stopped, sniffed the scent of the ripe fruit, the flowers, and the fading leaves, and put on a stern, angry face, for he was indeed vexed. Here lay these two beautiful creatures now, blighted by life, crumpled up, attacked from ambush. Why? Why this barbarity? Why this waste? He drew up his gray eyebrows discontentedly and blinked out at the fringe of forest which lay far away in a violet haze. Was it not perhaps a misunderstanding, his misunderstanding, this charming culture that he had carefully erected like a fence about himself and his dear ones? Could one learn how to live here? As he passed Lisa, he heard her say in her elegiac fashion,

"I do not believe that Billy can understand a great pain, or that she can enjoy it, for we must be able to enjoy even our pain."

"Enjoy, *ma chère, quelle idée,*" said Madame Bonnechose, without looking up from her knitting.

The count passed on and came to a stop before Billy. "Well, how are you?" he asked a little sternly.

Billy flushed. "Thank you, papa, well. I wanted to tell you something."

"Oh, you did." The count sat down on a garden-chair facing his daughter and looked attentively at her.

"I wanted to ask you," began Billy, looking up into the pear-tree, "I wanted to ask you if you have forgiven me."

"Yes, certainly," the count slowly replied, as if he had been given a problem to solve. "When we pardon some one, we wish by doing so to help him get over something he has experienced or done. In this case, of course, that is my liveliest wish."

Billy leaned her head back satisfied, and gently moved it to and fro on her pillow as fever-patients are wont to do. "When we are sick," she said, "time goes faster, I think; what went before the sickness lies so far away. It seems to me as if I had done so much during this time of sickness, and especially I have walked a great deal, always walking, always on the way, and always such wonderfully strange roads. I don't remember much of it all, I only know one thing: I was walking along a yellow country road and ahead of me some one was walking, and somebody ahead of her, and so on; there were many figures, and they were all wearing my brown rain-coat and my muslin dress with the pink carnation figure, in fact they were all Billys, and I knew the point was for me to catch up with the Billy that was ahead of me. That seemed very important to me."

"H'm," remarked the count, "an interesting dream. Those are our mirrored images that become emancipated in our dreams. And now," he smiled at his daughter, "now you think you have caught that other Billy."

Billy still kept looking up at the pear-tree, and gently rocked her head. "Now I am quite happy," she said meditatively, "but perhaps I ought not to be. Lisa says

that any one who has a great grief should stand before it like a soldier on guard."

Count Hamilcar angrily thrust out his underlip and said sharply, "To stand before one's follies like a soldier on guard is certainly not commendable."

Billy did not seem to hear him. She still kept on dreamily talking to the little golden-yellow pears that hung over her: "And to be faithless, to be faithless is so terribly villainous."

The count bent forward, lifted his extended index finger in the sunshine, and said slowly and impressively, "My daughter, provision is made that we shall not be faithless, but remain true, to our sad or foolish experiences. They run after us in any case. Perhaps we are continually changing, and that is well. But the score always remains the same. To come back to your remarkable dream, when the one Billy has successfully caught the other Billy, you can be sure that the old Billy gives all the burdens she has had to carry to the new one to take with her. That is and must be so."

"All — for ever," said Billy under her breath, and she looked at her father with a glance of such helpless fear that he dropped his eyes, for a keen compassion caused him almost physical pain.

"Well, well," he rejoined, "when there are as many Billys as you have before you, there cannot fail to be many pleasant things to take along."

"Yes, don't you think lots of good things must still come?" cried Billy. The count looked up in surprise. He saw that Billy had raised her arms and clasped her hands over her head, and she was smiling a wonderfully expectant smile.

"Oh, that's it," he murmured, "why, then, in that case —" He rose, brushed Billy's cheeks hastily with two fingers, and slowly walked back up the garden-path. Not much need for consolation in that quarter. This child was far ahead of him in her faith in life; there was nothing

further for him to say. He sat down on the bench at the edge of the meadow, wishing to sun himself. How they loved life, these poor children, and how they trusted it! Yes, and life wants that: to be loved, so as to be cruel. Perhaps a good method, always supposing there is a purpose in it. He gently passed his hand over brow and eyes: if only sympathy were not so exhausting, always to share the lives of others, although — to be sure, three-fourths of our life lies somewhere in the lives of others. If we cannot share that, only one-fourth is left to us, and that is too little for intoxication, that is almost abstemiousness. Oh, very well, abstemiousness generally results in comprehension, only in this case comprehension is not so simple. He squeezed his eyelids together as if wishing to gather into his eyes and crush to powder the flaming gold of the afternoon light. How *was* that? — he was trying to recall a verse in Homer. His memory left him in the lurch, too: how does it go where Hector's soul is wailing aloud because it must give up its beloved life? He could not recall it. Poor devil, by the way, right out of the midst of his intoxication. One of the great flies now came flying past Count Hamilcar with softly buzzing wings. He went "brrr" with his lips and smiled a really cheerful smile as he watched how this queer bundle of gauzy wings and golden gossamer floated deliriously through the sunshine. "Mad with life," he thought, "if all this only has some object. At any rate there is more chance for meaning than for the lack of it, although — if I am a digit in the great calculation, then to be sure I have a meaning, but that is no reason at all why the result under the black line must have a significance for me." The point was to be a digit in the result under that line. However, thinking exhausted him. Why must we always think? — another prejudice. Let us not think, but breathe. He leaned back and opened his mouth a little. Breathing too might have been made an easier and simpler affair. He was cold, doubtless he would have to walk a little further; he tried to rise, but his

legs would not carry him. He stretched out his long arms as if wishing to get an armful of sunshine, and his face assumed a vexed, anxious expression; then he fell back, became quite still, and collapsed, leaning a trifle crookedly over the arm of the bench in that weary movement which the first moment of death brings to man, before its chill severity comes. The sun was already low, bathing the mute figure in ruddy light, a gentle zephyr stirred a gray tuft of hair on the pale temple, and the big fly flew back again with a buzz past the white nose, motionless now. Round about, the ripe fruit fell heavily upon the turf, making the whir of the field-crickets cease for a moment. But yonder under the pear-tree sat Billy, looking into the evening sun with feverishly shining eyes, and still smiling her expectant, longing smile.

THOMAS MANN

TONIO KRÖGER (1902)

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I

THE winter sun, only a poor make-believe, hung milky pale behind cloud strata above the cramped city. Wet and draughty were the gable-fringed streets, and now and then there fell a sort of soft hail, not ice and not snow.

School was out. Over the paved yard and from out the barred portal streamed the throngs of the liberated. Big boys dignifiedly held their books tightly under their left armpits, while their right arms rowed them against the wind toward the noon meal; little fellows set off on a merry canter, so that the icy slush spattered, and the traps of Science rattled in their knapsacks of seal leather. But here and there all caps flew off, and a score of reverent eyes did homage to the hat of Odin and the beard of Jove — on some senior teacher striding along with measured step . . .

"Is it you at last, Hans?" said Tonio Kröger, who had long been waiting on the drive; and with a smile he stepped up to his friend, who was just coming out of the gate in conversation with other comrades, and who was on the point of going off with them.

"What is it?" asked the latter, looking at Tonio; — "Oh yes, that's so; well, let's take a little walk, then."

Tonio was silent, and his eyes grew sad. Had Hans forgotten, not to think of it again until this minute, that

they were going to walk a bit together this noon? And he himself had been looking forward to it almost uninterruptedly since the plan was made.

"Well, so long, fellows," said Hans Hansen to his comrades. "I'm going to take a little walk with Kröger." And they turned to the left, while the others sauntered off to the right.

Hans and Tonio had time to go walking after school, because they both belonged to houses in which dinner was not eaten until four o'clock. Their fathers were great merchants who held public offices and were a power in the city. For many a generation the Hansens had owned the extensive lumber yards down along the river, where mighty steam saws cut up the logs amid buzzing and hissing. And Tonio was Consul Kröger's son, whose grain sacks were carted through the streets day after day, with the broad black trade mark on them; the big ancient house of his ancestors was the most princely of the whole town. The two friends had to take off their caps constantly, because of their many acquaintances, and indeed these fourteen-year-old boys did not always have to bow first.

Both had hung their school-bags over their shoulders, and both were dressed warmly and well; Hans in a short seaman's jacket, over the shoulders and back of which lay the broad blue collar of his sailor suit, Tonio in a gray belted top-coat. Hans wore a Danish sailor's cap with short ribbons, a tuft of his flaxen hair peeping out from under it. He was extraordinarily handsome and well formed, broad of shoulder and narrow of hip, with unshaded, keen, steel-blue eyes. From under Tonio's round fur cap, on the other hand, there looked out of a swarthy face, with very clearly marked southern features, dark and delicately shaded eyes under excessively heavy lids, dreamy and a trifle timid. Mouth and chin were both fashioned with uncommonly soft lines. He walked carelessly and unevenly, whereas Hans's slender legs in their black stockings moved so elastically and rhythmically.

Tonio did not speak. He was grieved. Drawing together his rather slanting eyebrows, and holding his lips pursed for whistling, he looked into space with his head on one side. This attitude and expression were peculiar to him.

Suddenly Hans thrust his arm under that of Tonio with a sidelong glance at him, for he understood quite well what the matter was. And although Tonio persisted in silence during the next few steps, yet he was all at once amazingly softened.

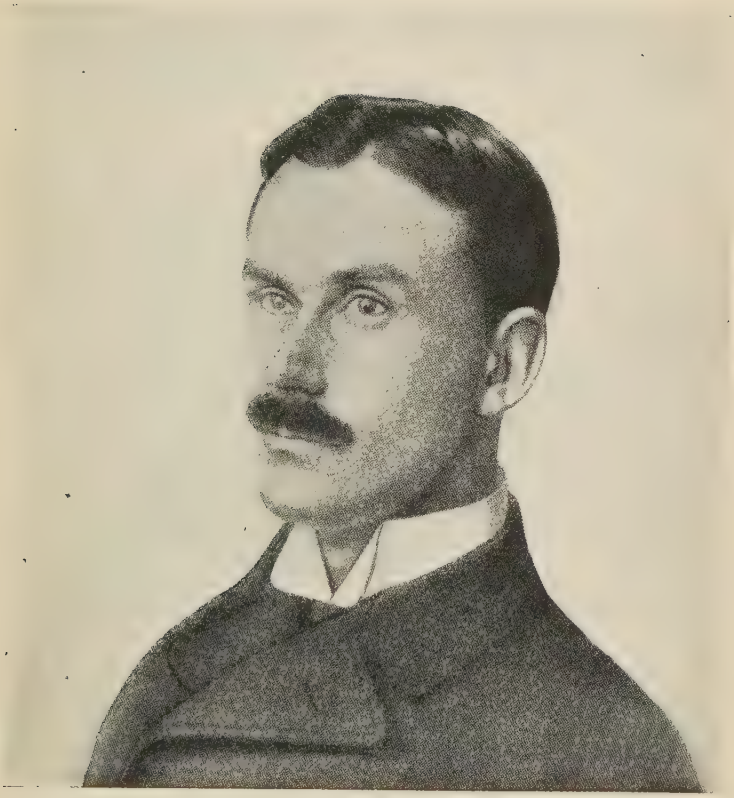
"You know I hadn't forgotten, Tonio," said Hans, looking down at the walk before him, "but I simply thought probably nothing could come of it today, because it's so wet and windy, you know. But that doesn't bother me at all, and I think it's fine that you waited for me in spite of it. I had begun to think you had gone on home, and was vexed . . ."

At these words Tonio's entire being began to leap and shout.

"Why, then we'll go over the ramparts now," he said with agitated voice. Over the Mill Rampart and the Holsten Rampart, and then I'll take you home that way, Hans . . . Why no, it doesn't matter if I go home alone then; next time you'll go with me."

At bottom he did not believe very completely in what Hans had said, and he felt distinctly that the latter assigned only half as much importance to this walk as he. But yet he saw that Hans regretted his forgetfulness and was making it a point to conciliate him. And he was far from wishing to impede the conciliation.

The fact was that Tonio loved Hans Hansen and had already suffered much for his sake. He who loves most is the weaker and must suffer — this simple and bitter doctrine of life his fourteen-year-old spirit had already accepted; and he was so constituted that he marked well all such experiences, and as it were jotted them down inwardly, and indeed he had a certain pleasure in them, though to be sure without ordering his conduct accordingly



THOMAS MANN

and so deriving practical benefit from them. Furthermore, his nature was such that he deemed such teachings much more important and interesting than the knowledge which was forced upon him in school; during the class hours in the vaulted Gothic school-rooms he applied himself mostly to tasting the sensations of such bits of insight to the lees, and thinking them out in their entirety. This occupation afforded the same kind of satisfaction as when he would walk up and down his room with his violin (for he played the violin), letting the soft tones, as soft as he could produce them, mingle with the plashing of the fountain which rose in a flickering jet under the branches of the old walnut-tree in the garden below.

The fountain, the old walnut, his violin, and far away the sea, the Baltic, whose summer dreams he could listen to in the long vacation — these were the things he loved, with which he encompassed himself, as it were, and among which his inward life ran its course; things whose names may be employed with good effect in verse, and which did actually ring out time and again in the verses which Tonio Kröger occasionally composed.

This fact, that he possessed a note-book with verse of his own in it, had become known through his own fault, and it injured him greatly both with his fellows and his teachers. The son of Consul Kröger thought it on the one hand stupid and base to condemn him for writing verses, and he despised on that account both fellows and teachers, whose bad manners were always repellent to him, and whose personal weaknesses he detected with strange penetration. On the other hand, he himself found it really an improper dissipation to write verse, and so had to agree to some extent with all those who regarded it as a doubtful occupation. But this could not make him give it up.

As he wasted his time at home, was slow and generally inattentive in class hours, and had a bad record with his teachers, he always brought home the most wretched reports; at which his father, a tall, carefully dressed gentle-

man with meditative blue eyes, who always wore a wild flower in his button-hole, showed himself both incensed and distressed. But to his mother, his beautiful mother with the black hair, whose name was Consuelo and who was altogether so different from the other ladies of the town, because Tonio's father had once fetched her from clear down at the bottom of the map — to his mother his reports were absolutely immaterial.

Tonio loved his dark, passionate mother, who played the piano and the mandolin so wonderfully, and he was happy that she did not grieve over his doubtful position among men. On the other hand, however, he realized that his father's anger was much more estimable and respectable, and although he was censured by his father, he was at bottom quite in agreement with him, whereas he found the cheerful indifference of his mother a trifle unprincipled. At times his thoughts would run about thus: "It is bad enough that I am as I am, and will not and cannot alter myself, negligent, refractory, and intent on things that nobody else thinks of. At least it is proper that they should seriously chide and punish me for it, and not pass it over with kisses and music. After all, we aren't gipsies in a green wagon, but decent folks, Consul Krögers, the Kröger family" . . . And not infrequently he would think: "Well, why am I so peculiar and at outs with everything, at loggerheads with my teachers and a stranger among the boys? Look at them, the good pupils and those of honest mediocrity. They don't think the teachers funny, they write no verses, and they only think what others think and what you can say out loud. How proper they must feel, how satisfied with everything and everybody. That must be nice . . . But what ails me, and how will all this end?"

This fashion of scrutinizing himself and his relation to life played an important part in Tonio's love for Hans Hansen. First of all he loved him because he was handsome; but also because he seemed to be his own antipodes

and converse in all respects. Hans Hansen was an excellent scholar and at the same time a lively fellow who rode, swam, and played athletic games like a hero and rejoiced in universal popularity. The teachers were devoted to him almost to the point of affection, called him by his Christian name, and advanced him in every way; his comrades were eager for his favor, and on the street ladies and gentlemen would stop him, seize him by the tuft of flaxen hair that peeped out from under his Danish sailor's cap, saying, "Good day, Hans Hansen with your pretty tuft! Are you still *Primus?* Remember me to father and mother, my fine boy . . ."

That was Hans Hansen, and ever since Tonio Kröger first knew him he felt a longing as often as he beheld him, an envious longing that dwelt above his breast and burned there. "Oh, if one had such blue eyes," he thought, "and lived such an orderly life and in such happy communion with the whole world as you do! You are always occupied in some decorous and universally respected way. When you have done your tasks for school, you take riding lessons or work with the fret-saw, and even in the long vacation on the seashore your time is taken up with rowing, sailing, and swimming; while I lie lost in idle thought on the sand, staring at the mysteriously changing expressions that flit over the countenance of the sea. And that is why your eyes are so clear. To be like you." . . .

He did not make the attempt to be like Hans Hansen, and perhaps he did not even mean this wish very seriously. But he did have an aching desire to be loved by Hans, just as he was, and he sued for that love in his fashion, a slow and intimate, devoted, passive and sorrowful fashion, but a sorrow which can burn more deeply and consumingly than all the swift passionateness one might have expected in view of his foreign appearance.

And he did not sue wholly in vain; for Hans, who by the way respected a certain superiority in Tonio, a skill in speech which enabled him to give utterance to difficult matters, understood quite well that an unusually strong and

tender affection was vibrating here, showed himself grateful, and gave Tonio many a happy hour by meeting him half-way — but also many a pang of jealousy and disappointment, the pain of a vain endeavor to find a common spiritual ground. For the remarkable thing was that Tonio, although he envied Hans Hansen for his way of living, constantly tried to bring him around to his own, which he could never do for more than a few minutes, and then only in seeming.

"I've just been reading something wonderful, something splendid," he said. They were walking along, eating fruit tablets from a bag which they had purchased at Iverson's on Mill Street for ten pfennig. "You must read it, Hans, it is *Don Carlos* by Schiller. I'll lend it to you, if you wish."

"No, no," said Hans Hansen, "never mind, Tonio, that's not my style. I stick to my horse-books, you know. Splendid illustrations in them, I tell you. Sometime I'll show them to you at the house. They are snap-shots, and you see the horses trotting and galloping and jumping, in every position, such as you would never see in life because they move too fast."

"In all positions?" asked Tonio politely. "Yes, that's fine, but as for *Don Carlos,* it is beyond all comprehension. There are passages in it, you'll see, that are so beautiful that it gives you a jerk, as if something had suddenly burst."

"Burst?" asked Hans Hansen. "How do you mean?"

"For example, there is the passage where the king has wept because he has been deceived by the marquis — but the marquis has only deceived him for love of the prince, you understand, for whom he is sacrificing himself. And now the news that the king has wept comes out of his cabinet into the ante-room. 'Wept? The king has wept?' All the courtiers are terribly taken aback, and it just goes through you, for he's an awfully stiff and strict king. But you understand so clearly that he did weep, and I really

feel sorrier for him than for the marquis and the prince together. He's always so utterly alone and without love, and now he thinks he has found a friend, and the friend betrays him . . ."

Hans Hansen cast a sidelong glance into Tonio's face, and something in that face must surely have won him over to this subject, for he suddenly thrust his arm into Tonio's again and asked,

"Why, how does he betray the king, Tonio?"

Tonio was stirred to action.

"Why, the fact is," he began, "that all letters to Brabant and Flanders . . ."

"There comes Erwin Immerthal," said Hans.

Tonio was silent. "If only the earth would swallow him up," he thought, "this Immerthal. Why must he come and disturb us? I only hope he won't go along and talk about his riding lessons the whole hour"—For Erwin Immerthal had riding lessons also. He was the son of a bank director and lived here outside the gate. With his crooked legs and his eyes like slits he came along the avenue to meet them, his school-bag already safe at home.

"Hello, Immerthal," said Hans. "I'm taking a little walk with Kröger."

"I have to go into town," said Immerthal, "on some errands. But I'll walk a piece with you . . . Those are fruit tablets, aren't they? Thanks, yes, I'll eat a couple. We take another lesson tomorrow, Hans."—He meant the riding lesson.

"Fine!" said Hans. "You know, I'm going to get the leather spats now, because I got A on my exercise last week."

"I suppose you aren't taking riding lessons yet, Kröger?" asked Immerthal, and his eyes were only a pair of shining slits.

"No," answered Tonio with quite uncertain accent.

"You ought to ask your father, Kröger," remarked Hans Hansen, "to let you take lessons too."

"Ayah," said Tonio both hastily and indifferently. For a moment he had a lump in his throat, because Hans had called him by his surname; and Hans seemed to feel this, for he said in explanation:

"I call you Kröger, because your Christian name is so crazy; excuse me, but I don't like it. Tonio . . . that's no name at all. But then it's not your fault, of course not."

"No, I suppose the chief reason why you are named that is because it sounds foreign and is uncommon," said Immerthal, acting as if he wanted to patch things up.

Tonio's mouth quivered. He pulled himself together and said,

"Yes, it is a silly name, and Heaven knows I wish I were named Heinrich or Wilhelm, you can take my word for that. But the reason is that a brother of my mother, for whom I was christened, is named Antonio; for you know my mother came from over there . . ."

Then he said no more, and let the other two talk of horses and harness. Hans had taken Immerthal's arm, and was talking with a fluent sympathy which never could have been aroused in him for *Don Carlos* . . . From time to time Tonio felt rising and tickling his nose a desire to weep; and he had difficulty in controlling his chin, which constantly tried to quiver.

Hans did not like his name — what was to be done? His own name was Hans, and Immerthal's was Erwin; very well, those were universally recognized names that no one thought strange. But "Tonio" was something foreign and uncommon. Yes, there was something uncommon about him in every respect, whether he would or no, and he was alone and excluded from regular and ordinary folks, although he was no gipsy in a green wagon, but a son of Consul Kröger, of the Kröger family . . . But why did Hans call him Tonio so long as they were alone, if he began to be ashamed of him when a third person came up? At times Hans was close to him, even won over, it seemed. "How does he betray him, Tonio?" he had asked, and

taken his arm. But then when Immerthal came, Hans sighed with relief just the same, forsook him, and found no difficulty in reproaching him with his foreign name. How it hurt to have to see through all this! . . . At bottom, Hans Hansen liked him a little when they were alone together, he knew that. But when a third person came, Hans was ashamed of it and sacrificed him. And he was alone again. He thought of King Philip. The king had wept . . .

"For heaven's sake," said Erwin Immerthal, "now I really must be off into town. Good-by, fellows, and thanks for the candy." With that he jumped upon a bench that stood beside the street, ran along it with his crooked legs, and trotted off.

"I like Immerthal," said Hans emphatically. Hans had a spoiled and self-conscious way of making known his likes and antipathies, of distributing them with royal favor, as it were . . . And then he went on to speak of the riding lessons, for he was now in that vein. Besides, it was now not far to the Hansens' house; the walk over the ramparts did not take very long. They held their caps tightly, and bowed their heads before the strong damp wind that creaked and groaned in the bare branches of the trees. And Hans Hansen talked, while Tonio interjected no more than a mechanical "Oh" or "Oh yes" from time to time, nor felt any joy that Hans had taken his arm again in the ardor of speech; for that was only a seeming advance, without significance.

Then they forsook the park strip along the ramparts not far from the station, watched a train puff by with clumsy haste, counted the cars to pass the time, and waved to the man who sat perched high on the last car, muffled in furs. And then they came to a stop on the square with the lindens in front of the villa of Hansen the wholesaler, and Hans showed in detail what fun it was to stand on the bottom of the garden gate and swing back and forth

until the hinges fairly screeched. But hereupon he took his leave.

"Well, now I must go in," he said. Good-by, Tonio. Next time I'll go home with you, be sure of that."

"Good-by, Hans," said Tonio, "it was nice to go walking."

The hands they clasped were quite wet and rusty from the garden gate. But when Hans looked into Tonio's eyes, something like penitent reflection came into his handsome face.

"And by the way, I'm going to read *Don Carlos* pretty soon," he said quickly. "That about the king in his cabinet must be fine." Then he put his school-bag under his arm and ran off through the front yard. Before he disappeared into the house he turned once more and nodded.

And Tonio Kröger went away quite transfigured and on wings. The wind was at his back, but that was not the only reason why he moved away so lightly.

Hans would read *Don Carlos,* and then they would have something in common, about which neither Immerthal nor any one else could talk with them. How well they understood each other. Who could tell — perhaps he might even bring him to the point of writing verses too . . . No, no, he did not want to do that. Hans must not become like Tonio, but remain as he was, so bright and strong, just as everybody loved him, and Tonio most of all. But to read *Don Carlos* wouldn't hurt him, just the same . . . And Tonio went through the old, square-built gate, along the harbor, and up the steep, draughty, and wet Gable Street to the house of his parents. That was when his heart lived; there was longing in it and melancholy envy and a tiny bit of contempt, and an unalloyed chaste blissfulness.

II

Fair-haired Inga, Ingeborg Holm, daughter of Doctor Holm who lived on the market-place where the Gothic fountain stood, lofty, many-pointed, and of varied form, she it was whom Tonio Kröger loved at sixteen.

How did that happen? He had seen her a thousand times; but one evening he saw her in a certain light, saw how in conversing with a girl friend she laughingly tossed her head in a certain saucy fashion, and carried her hand, a little-girl's hand, by no means especially slender or dainty, up to her back hair in a certain fashion, so that the white gauze sleeve slipped down from her elbow; heard how she pronounced a word, an insignificant word, in a certain fashion, with a warm ring in her voice,—and a rapture seized upon his heart, far stronger than that which he had formerly felt at times when he looked at Hans Hansen, in those days when he was a small, silly boy.

On this evening he took away with him an image of her, with the thick blond braid, the elongated, laughing blue eyes, and a delicately marked saddle of freckles on her nose, and could not sleep for hearing the ring in her voice, softly trying to imitate the intonation with which she had uttered the insignificant word, and quivering as he did so. Experience taught him that this was love. But although he knew perfectly that love must inevitably bring him much pain, affliction, and humiliation, that it moreover destroys peace and overfills the heart with sweet melodies, without giving a man peace enough to round off any one thing and calmly weld it into a unified whole, yet he entertained it with joy, surrendered wholly to it, and nursed it with all the powers of his spirit; for he knew that it gives life and riches, and he longed to be alive and rich, instead of calmly welding anything into a unified whole.

This loss of Tonio Kröger's heart to merry Inga Holm occurred in the empty drawing-room of Mrs. Consul Husteede, whose turn it was that evening to have the dancing class; for it was a private class, to which only members of the first families belonged, and they assembled in turn in the parental houses in order to receive instruction in dancing and deportment. For this special purpose dancing-master Knaak came over every week from Hamburg.

François Knaak was his name, and what a man he was! "*J'ai l'honneur de me vous représenter,*" he would say, "*mon nom est* Knaak . . . And this one does not say while one is bowing, but when one is again standing upright — not loudly and yet clearly. One is not every day in a position where one must introduce oneself in French, but if one can do so correctly and flawlessly in that language, then one will certainly not fail in German." How wonderfully the silky black frock-coat clung about his fat hips! In soft folds his trousers fell to his patent-leather pumps, which were adorned with broad satin bows, and his brown eyes looked about with a satiated happiness at their own beauty.

Every one was crushed by the excess of assurance and decorum in him. He would glide — and none could glide like him, elastic, rocking, swaying, royal — up to the mistress of the house, bow, and wait for her to extend her hand to him. When he had received it, he would thank her in a low voice, step back springily, turn on his left foot, snap the toe of his right foot sidewise off the floor, and glide away with swaying hips.

One went out of the door backward and bowing when one left a company; one did not bring up a chair by seizing one leg of it, or dragging it along the floor, but one carried it lightly by the back and set it down noiselessly. One did not stand with hands folded on the — pardon! — belly, and the tongue thrust into the cheek; but if one did so none the less, M. Knaak had such a fashion of doing likewise that one preserved for the rest of his days a loathing for this attitude.

This was deportment. But as for dancing, M. Knaak mastered that in still higher degree, if possible. In the empty salon the gas-flames of the chandelier and the candles on the mantle-piece were burning. The floor was strewn with soapstone, and the pupils stood about in a mute semicircle. Beyond those portières, in the adjoin-

ing room, sat the mothers and aunts in plush chairs, surveying M. Knaak through their lorgnettes, as he bowed forward, grasped the hem of his frock-coat with two fingers of each hand, and with springy legs demonstrated the various steps of the mazurka. But when he had a mind to completely startle his audience, he would suddenly and without cogent reason leap high in the air, cut pigeon-wings with bewildering rapidity, trilling with his feet, so to say, whereupon he would return to this earth with a muffled thud which, however, shook everything to its foundations.

"What an incomprehensible monkey!" thought Tonio Kröger. But he saw clearly that Inga Holm, the merry Inga, often followed M. Knaak's movements with a self-forgetful smile, and this was not the only reason why all this wonderfully controlled corporosity did at bottom wrest from him something like admiration. How peaceful and unperplexed M. Knaak's eyes were! They did not penetrate to the point where matters grow complex and mournful; they knew nothing save that they were brown and beautiful. But that was why his bearing was so haughty. Yes, you must be stupid in order to walk like him; and then you would be loved because you were amiable. He comprehended so readily that Inga, fair-haired, sweet Inga, looked upon M. Knaak as she did. But would never a maiden look thus upon himself?

Oh yes, that happened. There was Magdalen Vermehren, lawyer Vermehren's daughter, with the gentle mouth and the large, dark, shining eyes full of seriousness — and sentimentality. She often fell in dancing; but she came to him when it was ladies' choice, she knew that he wrote verses, twice she had asked him to show them to her, and often she looked at him from a distance with lowered head. But what good was that to him? As for him, he loved Inga Holm, the fair-haired merry Inga, who undoubtedly despised him because he wrote poetic things . . . he looked at her, saw her elongated blue eyes full of happi-

ness and mockery, and an envious longing, a bitter, harassing pain at being cut off from her and eternally foreign to her, dwelt in his breast and burned there . . .

"First couple *en avant!*" said M. Knaak, and no words can describe how wonderfully the man brought out the nasal sound. They were practising the quadrille, and to Tonio Kröger's intense terror he found himself in the same set with Inga Holm. He avoided her when he could, and still he kept getting near her; he forbade his eyes to approach her, and still his glance was forever striking her . . . Now she came gliding and running up hand in hand with red-headed Ferdinand Matthiessen, threw back her braid, and placed herself opposite him, breathing deeply; Mr. Heinzelmann the pianist ran his bony fingers over the keys, M. Knaak called out the figures, and the quadrille began.

She moved back and forth before him, forward and back, gliding and turning: a fragrance that came from her hair or the dainty white stuff of her dress reached him now and then, and his eyes grew sadder and sadder. "I love you, dear, sweet Inga," he was saying to himself; and he put into these words all the pain he felt that she was so merry and so intent on the dancing, and paid no heed to him. A wonderful poem by Storm came to his mind: "I fain would sleep, but thou must dance." He was tormented by the humiliating contradiction that lay in having to dance while he was in love . . .

"First couple *en avant!*" said M. Knaak, for a new figure was beginning. "*Compliment! Moulinet des dames! Tour de main!*" And no one can describe in what a graceful manner he swallowed the silent *e* in *de.*

"Second couple *en avant!*" Tonio Kröger and his lady were the ones. "*Compliment!*" And Tonio Kröger bowed. "*Moulinet des dames!*" And Tonio Kröger, with lowered head and gloomy brow, laid his hand on the hands of the four ladies, on that of Inga Holm, and danced "*moulinet.*"

All around there arose a giggling and laughing. M. Knaak assumed a ballet pose which expressed a conventionalized horror. "O dear," he cried. "Halt, halt! Kröger has got in among the ladies. *En arrière,* Miss Kröger, back, *fi donc!* All understand it now except you. Quick, away, back with you!" And he drew out his yellow silk handkerchief and waved Tonio Kröger back to his place with it.

Everybody laughed — the boys, the girls, and the ladies beyond the portières; for M. Knaak had made the little episode too funny for words, and all were amused as at a play. Only Mr. Heinzelmann waited with unmoved official countenance for the signal to play on, for he was hardened against M. Knaak's effects.

Then the quadrille was continued. And then there was an intermission. The second-girl came clinking through the door with a tea-tray of wine-jelly in glasses, and the cook followed in her wake with a cargo of raisin-cake. But Tonio Kröger stole away in secret out into the corridor, and there placed himself with his hands behind him at the window with drawn blinds, not reflecting that one could see nothing at all through the blinds, and that it was therefore ridiculous to stand in front of them and to act as if one were looking out.

But he looked into himself, where there was so much grief and longing. Why, why was he here? Why was he not sitting in his room by the window, reading in Storm's *Immensee* and looking now and then into the twilight of the garden, where the old walnut-tree was groaning heavily? That would have been the place for him. Let the others dance and be lively and adept at it . . . But no, this was the right place after all, where he knew himself near to Inga, even though he only stood lonely and far off, trying to distinguish her voice, with its ring of warm life, in the hum, clinking, and laughter there within. Oh, your laughing blue almond eyes, you fair-haired Inga! As fair and merry as you, one can be only when one does not

read *Immensee* and never attempts to compose its like; that is the sad part! . . .

She ought to come to him! She ought to notice that he was gone, ought to feel how it was with him, ought to follow him secretly, if only out of compassion, lay her hand on his shoulder and say: "Come in and join us and be happy, for I love you." And he listened for steps behind him, and waited in unreasonable suspense for her to come. But she came not at all. The like of that did not happen on earth.

Had she too laughed at him, like all the rest? Yes, she had done so, gladly as he would have denied it for her and his own sake. And yet he had only danced "*moulinet des dames*" because absorbed in her presence. And what did it matter? Perhaps they would stop laughing some time. Had not a magazine a short while before accepted one of his poems, though it was discontinued before the poem could appear? The day would come when he would be famous, when everything he wrote would be printed, and then it was to be seen whether that wouldn't make an impression on Inga Holm . . . But it wouldn't make any impression, no, that was just the trouble. On Magdalen Vermehren, who was always falling down, yes, on her it would. But never on Inga Holm, never on the blue-eyed, merry Inga. And so was it not in vain?

Tonio Kröger's heart contracted with pain at this thought. To feel how wonderful sportive and melancholy powers are stirring in you, and to know at the same time that those to whom your longing draws you are gaily inaccessible to them, that hurts grievously. But although he stood lonely, shut out, and without hope before closed blinds, pretending in his distress that he could look through them, he was none the less happy. For in those days his heart lived. Warmly and sadly it beat for you, Ingeborg Holm, and his soul embraced your blond, bright, and saucily ordinary little personality in blissful self-abnegation.

More than once he stood with heated face in lonely spots but faintly reached by music, the scent of flowers, and the clink of glasses, seeking to distinguish your ringing voice in the distant hum of the festive throng; grieving for you he stood, and still was happy. More than once it pained him that he could talk to Magdalen Vermehren, who was always falling down, that she understood him and was merry or grave with him, whereas fair-haired Inga, even though he sat beside her, seemed distant and strange and estranged, for his language was not hers; and still he was happy. For happiness, he told himself, is not being loved; that is satisfied vanity mingled with repugnance. Happiness consists in loving and snatching up perhaps tiny, deceptive approaches to the loved object. And he noted down this idea inwardly, thought it out in its entirety, and tasted it to the lees.

"Faithfulness!" thought Tonio Kröger. "I will be faithful and love you, Ingeborg, as long as I live." So good were his intentions. And yet a secret fear and sadness whispered: "You know you have forgotten Hans Hansen altogether, although you see him daily." And the hateful and pitiful thing was that this soft and slightly malicious voice had the right of it, that time went on and days came when Tonio Kröger was no longer so unconditionally ready to die for the merry Inga as formerly, because he felt in himself the desire and the ability to accomplish in his fashion a quantity of remarkable things in the world.

And he cautiously circled about the altar of sacrifice on which the pure and chaste flame of his love was blazing, knelt before it, and stirred and fed it in every way, because he wanted to be faithful. Yet after a time, imperceptibly, without sensation or noise, it went out nevertheless.

But Tonio Kröger stood yet awhile before the chilled altar, full of wonder and disappointment to find that faithfulness was impossible on earth. Then he shrugged his shoulders and went his way.

III

He went the way he had to go, a little carelessly and unevenly, whistling to himself, looking into space with head on one side; and if he went astray, that was because there simply is no right path for some individuals. If you asked him what in all the world he intended to be, he would supply varying information, for he was wont to say (and had already written it down) that he had in him the possibilities of a thousand forms of existence, together with the secret consciousness that they really were one and all impossibilities.

Even before he departed from his cramped native city, the clamps and threads with which it held him had gently loosened their hold. The old family of the Krögers had little by little begun to crumble and disintegrate, and men had reason to reckon Tonio Kröger's own existence and nature among the other features of that process. His father's mother had died, the head of the family, and not long afterward his father, the tall, meditative, carefully dressed gentleman with the wild flower in his buttonhole, had followed her in death. The big Kröger house together with its honorable history was for sale, and the firm went out of business. Tonio's mother, however, his beautiful, passionate mother, who played the piano and the mandolin so wonderfully, and to whom everything was quite immaterial, married anew after the lapse of a year, this time a musician, a virtuoso with an Italian name whom she followed to faraway lands. Tonio Kröger found this a trifle unprincipled; but was *he* called upon to prevent her? He who wrote verses and could not even answer the question what in all the world he intended to become . . .

And he forsook his zigzagging native city, around whose gables the damp winds whistled, forsook the fountain and the old walnut-tree in the garden, the familiars of his youth, forsook also the sea that he loved so dearly, and felt no pain in so doing. For he had grown mature and shrewd,

had come to comprehend how things stood with himself, and was full of mockery of the stupid and vulgar existence that had so long held him in its midst.

He surrendered himself wholly to the power which seemed to him the most lofty on earth, into whose service he felt himself called, and which promised him rank and honors, the power of the spirit and of speech, which sits smilingly enthroned over this unconscious and mute life. With all his young passion he surrendered himself to her, and she rewarded him with all she has to bestow, and took from him inexorably all that she is wont to take as equivalent.

She sharpened his eyes and made him see through and through the big words that swell men's bosoms, she unlocked for him the souls of men and his own soul, made him a seer, and showed him the heart of the world and every first cause hidden behind words and deeds. But what he saw was this: comedy and misery — comedy and misery.

Then came loneliness with the anguish and the arrogance of this knowledge, because he could not endure the circle of the innocent with their happily beclouded minds, and the mark on his brow was disconcerting to them. But sweeter and sweeter grew to him the joy in words and in beautiful forms, for he was wont to say (and had already written it down) that mere knowledge of the soul would infallibly make us dejected if the pleasure of expression did not keep us awake and lively. . . .

So he lived in great cities and in the South, from whose sunshine he promised himself a more luxuriant maturing of his art; and perhaps it was the blood of his mother that drew him thither. But as his heart was dead and without love, he fell into adventures of the flesh, sank deeply into lust and the guilt of passion, and suffered unspeakably from it all. Perhaps it was the heritage of his father in him, of that tall, meditative, neatly dressed gentleman with the wild flower in his button-hole, that made him suffer so down yonder, and that occasionally set in motion within

him a faint, yearning recollection of a pleasure of the spirit, which had once been his own, and which he could not find again in all his pleasures.

A loathing and a hatred of the senses seized him, and a thirst for purity and decency and peace; while after all he was breathing the air of art, that lukewarm, sweet air of an eternal spring, pregnant with fragrance, in which a mysterious procreative rapture seethes and germinates and sprouts. So the only result was that Tonio, without support between these crass extremes, tossed back and forth between icy intellectuality and consuming sensual fire, led an exhausting life amid torments of conscience, an exquisite, debauched, extraordinary life, which he, Tonio Kröger, abhorred in his heart. What vagaries, he thought at times. How was it ever possible that I should fall into all these eccentric adventures? After all, I was no gipsy in a green wagon to start with . . .

But in the same measure that his health was undermined, his artistry grew keener, becoming fastidious, exquisite, precious, delicate, irritable toward the banal, and most sensitive in matters of tact and taste. When he first came forward, there was much noise of approval and joy among those concerned, for what he had produced was a thing full of valuable work, of humor, and of acquaintance with suffering. And his name, the same name that his teachers had once used to reprove him, the same name that he had signed to his first rhymes to the walnut-tree, the fountain, and the sea, this mixture of north and south, this plebeian name with the exotic flavor, swiftly became the standing symbol of excellence; for with the painful thoroughness of his experience became associated a rare, tenacious, and ambitious industry, whose struggle with the finical sensitiveness of his taste produced, amid exquisite torments, unusual works.

He did not work like one who works to live, but like one who desires nothing but work, because he counts the living man as nothing, only wishes to be considered as a creator,

and for the rest goes about in unobtrusive gray like an unpainted actor who is nothing so long as he has no part to play. He worked in mute isolation, excluding and despising those petty ones who used their talent as a social ornament, who either went about in barbarous raggedness, whatever the state of their fortunes, or else were extravagant in " personal " cravats; whose foremost thought was to live happily, amiably, and artistically, ignorant of the fact that good works can only originate under the pressure of an evil life, that he who lives does not work, and that one must have died in order to be altogether a creator.

IV

" Do I disturb you? " asked Tonio Kröger on the threshold of the studio. He was holding his hat in his hand, and even bowed slightly, although Lisaveta Ivanovna was his close friend, whom he told everything.

" Take pity on me, Tonio Kröger, and come in without ceremony," she replied with her frisking intonation. " It is no secret that you have enjoyed a good bringing up and know what is proper." Whereat she thrust her brush into her left hand beside the palette, extended her right to him, and looked into his face with a laugh and a shake of the head.

" Yes, but you are working," he said. " Let me see . . . Oh, you have made progress." And he surveyed in turn the colored sketches leaning against chairs on either side of the easel, and the great canvas covered with a network of squares, on which the first spots of color were beginning to appear in the confused and shadowy charcoal sketch.

It was in Munich, in a rear building on Schelling Street, up several flights of stairs. Outside, behind the broad north window, there was the blue of the sky, the twitter of birds, and sunshine; and the young, sweet breath of spring streaming in through an open trap-door mingled with the odor of fixative and oil-paint that filled the large work-room.

Unobstructed, the golden light of the bright afternoon flooded the spacious bareness of the studio, shone frankly on the somewhat damaged floor, the rude table under the window covered with bottles, tubes, and brushes, and the unframed studies on the unpapered walls; shone on the screen of tattered silk which stood near the door and shut off a small corner, tastefully furnished as a living-room and rest-room, shone also on the nascent work on the easel and the painter and the poet before it.

She might have been about as old as he, that is, a little past thirty. She sat on a low foot-stool in a dark-blue paint-spotted apron-dress, resting her chin on her hand. Her brown hair, tightly combed and already turning gray on either side, covered her temples in soft waves and supplied the frame for her dark Slavic face, infinitely appealing in its expression, with a pug-nose, sharply prominent cheek bones, and small, glittering black eyes. Expectant, distrustful, and as it were irritated, she squinted askance at her work . . .

He stood beside her, his right hand on his hip, his left rapidly twisting his brown moustache. His slanting eyebrows showed a gloomy and strained agitation, while he softly whistled to himself, as usual. His attire, most carefully selected and in excellent taste, was a suit of quiet gray and of conservative cut. But in his work-lined brow, above which his dark hair was so very simply and correctly parted, there was a nervous quiver, and the features of his Southern countenance were already sharply marked, as if a hard burin had gone over them and brought them into higher relief, whereas his mouth seemed so soft in outline, his chin so gently formed . . . After a time he drew his hand over brow and eyes and turned away.

"I ought not to have come," he said.

"Why not, Tonio Kröger?"

"I have just got up from my work, Lisaveta, and the inside of my head looks exactly like your canvas. A framework, a dim sketch soiled with alterations, and a few dabs

of color, to be sure; and now I come here and see the same. And the conflict and contrast that tormented me at home I find here too," and he sniffed the air. "It is strange. If an idea gains control of you, you will find it expressed everywhere, you will actually smell it in the wind. Fixative and the aroma of spring, isn't that it? Art and—well, what is the other? Do not say 'Nature,' Lisaveta, 'Nature' does not exhaust it. Oh, no, I think I ought rather to have gone walking, although it is a question whether I should have felt any better: five minutes ago, not far from here, I met a colleague, Adalbert the novelist, and he said in his aggressive way, 'Damn the spring! It is and always will be the most horrible season. Can you lay hold of one sensible idea, Kröger, can you work out the tiniest point or effect with any calmness, when you are feeling an indecent prickling in your blood and are upset by a whole mass of irrelevant sensations which so soon as you test them are unmasked as unmistakably trivial and wholly unusable stuff? As for me, I am going to the café now. That is neutral ground, untouched by the change of seasons, you see; it represents, so to speak, the remote and elevated sphere of the literary, where one is capable of none but distinguished ideas . . .' And he went to the café, and perhaps I ought to have gone along."

Lisaveta was amused.

"That is good, Tonio Kröger. That about 'indecent prickling' is good. And in a way he is right, for spring is really not a specially good time to work. But now listen to me. Now I am going to do this little thing just the same, to make this little point and effect, as Adalbert would say. Afterward we'll go into the drawing-room and drink some tea, and you will unburden yourself; for I can see well enough that you are loaded today. Until then you will group yourself anywhere, for example on that box yonder, if you are not afraid for your patrician garments."

"Oh, let me alone about my garments, Lisaveta Ivanovna! Would you want me to run around in a torn velvet

jacket or a red vest? Inwardly an artist is only too much of an adventurer. Outwardly he ought to dress well, devil take it, and behave like a decent person . . . No, I'm not loaded," he said, watching her prepare a mixture on her palette. "You heard me say that it was a problem and a contrast that is on my mind and that disturbed me at my work . . . What were we saying just now? Oh, Adalbert the novelist, and what a proud and substantial fellow he is. 'Spring is the most horrible season,' he said, and went to the café. For a man must know what he wants, mustn't he? You see, the spring makes me nervous too, I too am upset by the charming triviality of the recollections and sensations which it awakens; only that I cannot bring myself to the point of chiding and scorning the spring for it; for the fact is that I am ashamed before it, ashamed before its pure naturalness and its victorious youth. And I do not know whether to envy or to despise Adalbert for not knowing anything of this . . .

"We do work badly in the spring, certainly, and why? Because we feel. And because that man is a duffer who thinks the creative artist is allowed to feel. Every genuine and sincere artist smiles at the naïveté of this bungler's error — sadly perhaps, but he does smile. For what one says must of course never be the first consideration, but the ingredients, indifferent in themselves, from which the esthetic product is to be put together with easy, calm mastery. If you care too much about what you have to say, if your heart beats too warmly for it, you can be sure of a complete fiasco. You become emotional, you become sentimental; something unwieldy, awkwardly serious, uncontrolled, unironical, unspiced, tedious, or banal takes form under your hands, and the end is simply indifference in your public, simply disappointment and lamentation in yourself . . . For so it is, Lisaveta: feeling, any warm, hearty feeling is always banal and unusable, and only the irritations and the cold ecstasies of our demoralized, of our artistic nervous system are useful in art. It is neces-

sary that one should be something superhuman and inhuman, that one should have a strangely distant and uninterested relation to everything human, in order to be able or even tempted to play life, to play with it, to represent it effectively and tastefully. The talent for style, form, and expression presupposes this cool and fastidious relation to things human, and even a certain impoverishment and stagnation of the artist. For every healthy and strong emotion, that is beyond doubt, is tasteless. The artist is done for so soon as he becomes a man and begins to feel. Adalbert knew that, and that is why he went to the café, off to the remote sphere, yes indeed."

"Well, God be with him, Batushka," said Lisaveta, washing her hands in a tin basin; "you don't have to follow him."

"No, Lisaveta, I will not follow him, but only for the reason that I am now and then able to be a little ashamed before the spring-time of my artistry. You see, at times I get letters from unknown hands, letters of praise and thanks from my public, admiring apostrophes from affected readers. I read these and am myself touched in view of the warm and inarticulate human feeling which my art has aroused in these people; a kind of sympathy comes over me at the naïve enthusiasm which the letters utter, and I blush at the thought of how it would sober these honest folk if they could ever cast a glance behind the scenes, if their innocence could ever comprehend that an honest, healthy, and decent human being never writes, acts, or composes . . . all of which does not prevent me of course from using their admiration of my genius to strengthen and stimulate myself, that I take it with the gravest seriousness, and put on a face like that of an ape pretending to be a big man . . . Now don't put in your oar, Lisaveta! I tell you I am often weary to death of depicting things human without having any share in them . . . Is an artist a man, anyhow? Let some one ask 'woman' that question. It seems to me that we artists all share a little the fate of

those eunuchs that used to sing for the Pope . . . Our singing is touchingly beautiful. And yet—"

"You ought to be a little ashamed, Tonio Kröger. Now come and have tea. The water will boil directly, and here are cigarettes. You were speaking of sopranos when you stopped; go right on from there. But ashamed you ought to be. If I did not know with what pride and passion you are devoted to your calling . . ."

"Say nothing about a 'calling,' Lisaveta Ivanovna. Literature is not a calling, but a curse—let me tell you that. When does this curse begin to be perceptible? Early, terribly early. At a time when by rights one ought still to be living in peace and harmony with God and the world. You begin to feel yourself marked out, to feel yourself in a mysterious antagonism to other men, to every-day and decent men, and the abyss of irony, unbelief, opposition, knowledge, and feeling which cuts you off from the world yawns deeper and deeper; you are lonely, and from then on all possibility of understanding is over. What a fate! Suppose your heart sufficiently alive, sufficiently affectionate still, to feel it a terrible one . . . Your self-consciousness takes fire, because you among thousands feel that your brow bears the mark and that it escapes no one. I knew an actor of genius who as a man had to struggle with morbid embarrassment and instability. His over-sensitive ego-feeling, together with a lack of parts to play, of histrionic activity, had that effect upon this perfect artist and impoverished human being . . . An artist, a real one, not one whose official profession is art, but a predestined and pre-condemned artist, you can pick out of a thousand men, with a little sharpness of sight. The feeling of separation and of non-membership, of being recognized and observed, is in his face, something at once regal and perplexed. In the features of a prince walking in ordinary clothes through a crowd one can see something similar. But here no ordinary garb does any good, Lisaveta. Disguise yourself, mask yourself, dress like an attaché or like

a lieutenant of the Guard on leave: you will scarcely need to lift your eyes and utter a word before every one will know that you are not a man, but something strange, something that estranges, that is different . . .

"But *what* is the artist? Toward no question has mankind's indolence and inertia of discernment proved more unyielding than toward this one. 'Such things are a gift,' humbly say the good people who are under the influence of an artist, and because cheerful and exalted effects, according to their good-natured view, must quite inevitably have cheerful and exalted origins, nobody suspects that we may perhaps have here a most questionable 'gift,' most evilly conditioned . . . It is known that artists are over-sensitive — well, it is also known that this is not the case with people of good conscience and well-founded self-esteem . . . You see, Lisaveta, at the bottom of my soul — translated into the intellectual — I have all the suspicion of the artist *type* with which each one of my honorable forefathers up yonder in that cramped city would have encountered any charlatan or adventurous 'artist' that might have entered his house. Listen to this. I know a banker, a gray-haired business man, who possesses the ability to write stories. He makes use of this talent in his hours of leisure, and his things are sometimes quite excellent. Despite — I say 'despite' — this sublime talent, this man's record is not wholly stainless; on the contrary, he has already had to serve a long term in prison, and for valid reasons. Indeed it was really in prison that he first became aware of his ability, and his experiences as inmate of the jail form the fundamental theme in all his writings. One might infer from this, with a little boldness, that it is necessary to be at home in some sort of a penal institution in order to become a poet. But does not the suspicion arise that his experiences as convict may have been less intimately interwoven with the roots and origins of his artistry than what made him one — ? A banker who writes stories is a curiosity, isn't he? But a non-criminal, honest banker of clean

reputation who should write stories,— *there is no such thing* . . . Yes, now you are laughing, and still I am only half joking. No problem, none in the world, is more tormenting than that of artistry and its effect on humanity. Take that most extraordinary creation of the most typical and hence mightiest artist, take so morbid and deeply ambiguous a work as *Tristan and Isolde*, and observe the effect this work has upon a young, healthy man with strongly normal feeling. You see elevation, invigoration, warm and honest enthusiasm, perhaps stimulation to some ' artistic ' creation of his own . . . The good dilettante! Our hearts look very different from what he dreams, with his ' warm heart ' and ' honest enthusiasm.' I have seen artists surrounded by adoring women and shouting youths, whereas I *knew* about them . . . One constantly has the most peculiar experiences with regard to the origin, the co-phenomena, and the conditions of artistry . . . "

" In others, Tonio Kröger — excuse me — or not only in others? "

He was silent. He drew his slanting eyebrows together and whistled to himself.

" Let me have your cup, Tonio. It is not strong. And take a fresh cigarette. And anyway, you know quite well that you look at things as they don't necessarily have to be looked at."

" That is Horatio's answer, dear Lisaveta. ' 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so,' am I not right? "

" I say that one can consider them just as curiously from another side, Tonio Kröger. I am simply a stupid, painting female, and if I can make any answer to you at all, if I can take the part of your own calling to protect it a little against you, it is surely nothing new that I am advancing, but only a reminder of what you yourself know quite well . . . What then: the purifying, sanctifying power of literature; the destruction of passion by the agency of knowledge and speech; literature as the road to understanding, to forgiveness, and to love; the redeeming power of lan-

guage; literary intellect as the noblest phenomenon of all human intellect whatsoever; the writer as perfect man, as saint; — if one considered things so, would that be not considering them curiously enough?"

"You have a right to speak so, Lisaveta Ivanovna, and especially in view of the work of your poets, and that worship-deserving Russian literature which does really and truly represent the sacred literature you name. But I have not overlooked your objections, nay, they are a part of what is on my mind today . . . Look at me. I do not look immoderately cheerful, do I? A little old and sharp-featured and weary? Well, to come back to 'knowledge,' a man might be imagined, originally unsceptical, long-suffering, well-meaning, and a little sentimental, who would simply be ground to powder and wrecked by psychological clearness of vision. Not to let yourself be overcome by the sadness of the world; to observe, mark, and insert everything, even the most anguishing things, and for the rest be of good courage, even though in the full grasp of moral superiority over that horrible invention, Life — aye, to be sure! Yet at times things get away from you a bit despite all the pleasures of Expressing. Does understanding everything mean forgiving everything? I don't know. There is something that I call the loathing of perception, Lisaveta: a state in which a man only needs to see through a thing in order to feel nauseated to the point of dying (and by no means put into a reconciled mood) — the case of Hamlet the Dane, that most typical man of letters. He knew what it means to be called upon to know without being born to it. To see clearly even through the tear-woven veil of emotion, to recognize, mark, observe, and be obliged to thrust aside one's perceptions with a smile at the very moment when hands clasp each other, lips meet, and when eyes grow dim, blinded with deep feeling — it is infamous, Lisaveta, it is vile, revolting . . . but what good in revolting?

"Another side of the matter, but not less admirable, is then of course a blasé, indifferent, and ironically weary attitude toward all truth, and it is a fact that there is nothing on earth stupider or more hopeless than a circle of brilliant people who are already up to every dodge in the world. All knowledge is old and tedious. Utter a truth in whose conquest and possession you perhaps have a certain youthful joy, and your vulgar enlightenment will be answered by a very brief emission of air through the nose . . . Ah yes, literature wearies, Lisaveta! I assure you, it can come to pass in human society that sheer scepticism and continence of opinion make you seem stupid, whereas you are only proud and discouraged . . . So much for 'knowledge.' As for 'speech,' that is perhaps less a matter of redemption than of taking a feeling and putting it on ice. Seriously, there is an icy and revolting presumption in this prompt and superficial dispatching of emotion by means of literary speech. If your heart is too full, if you feel yourself too greatly stirred by some sweet or exalted experience, what could be simpler?—you go to the poet, and everything is regulated in the shortest time. He will analyze and formulate your affair for you, name and utter it and make it talk, relieve you of the whole thing, and make it indifferent to you for all time and accept no thanks for it. And you—you will go home relieved, cooled, and clarified, and wonder what there was in the matter that only a moment before could perplex you with so sweet a tumult. And would you seriously stand up for this cold and vain charlatan? What is uttered, so runs his confession of faith, is settled. If the whole world is put into speech, it is settled, redeemed, done away with . . . Very good. Yet I am no nihilist . . ."

"You are no—" said Lisaveta. She was just holding a spoonful of tea near her mouth, and stayed so as if paralyzed.

"Why yes . . . why yes . . . come to your senses,

Lisaveta. I am not that, I say, as far as living emotion is concerned. You see, the man of letters fails to understand, after all, that life still likes to go on living, that it is not ashamed of living after it *has* been put into words and 'redeemed.' Lo and behold, it keeps on sinning unflinchingly despite its redemption at the hand of literature; for all action is sin in the eyes of the mind . . .

"I am ready to make my point, Lisaveta. Listen to me. I am a lover of life — this is a confession. Take it and keep it, for I never made it to any one else. They say, they have actually written and printed it, that I hate or fear or despise or loathe life. I have liked to hear that, for it flattered me; but it is none the less false. I love life . . . You smile, Lisaveta, and I know why. But I conjure you, do not regard what I am just saying as literature. Do not think of Cesar Borgia or of any drunken philosophy that elevates him to its escutcheon. He is nothing to me, this Cesar Borgia. I have the poorest possible opinion of him, and I shall never in my life understand how men can revere the extraordinary and the demoniacal as an ideal. No, 'life,' standing as it does in eternal contrast to intellect and art — not as a vision of bloody greatness and barbarous beauty, not as the unusual does it appear to us unusual men; on the contrary, the normal, decorous, and amiable are the realm of our longing, and these are life in its seductive banality. That man is far from being an artist, my dear, whose ultimate and deepest passion is the exquisite, eccentric, and satanic, who knows no yearning for the innocent, simple, and vital, for a little friendship, devotion, familiarity, and human happiness — the furtive and consuming yearning, Lisaveta, for the raptures of the commonplace.

"A human friend! Will you believe that it would make me proud and happy to possess one friend among human beings? But so far I have had friends only among demons, goblins, deep-souled monsters, and spirits mute with knowledge: that is, among men of letters.

"At times I get on to some platform or other, find myself in a hall face to face with people who have come to listen to me. Do you know that I often watch myself surveying the audience, and catch myself stealthily looking around with the question in my heart: who is it that has come to me, whose applause and thanks are reaching me, with whom will my art procure me an ideal union here? . . . I do not find what I seek, Lisaveta. I find the flock and the congregation that are familiar to me, a gathering of the early Christians, as it were: people with awkward bodies and fine souls, people who are always falling down, so to speak — you understand — and for whom poetry is a gentle vengeance upon life; never any but sufferers, yearners, paupers, never one of those others, the blue-eyed ones, Lisaveta, who have no need of intellect! . . .

"And in the last analysis, would it not show a lamentable lack of logic, if one were glad to have it otherwise? It is inconsistent to love life, and none the less to endeavor constantly with every possible device to drag it over to your side, to win it over to the finesses and melancholies, the entire diseased nobility of literature. The realm of art is waxing, and that of health and innocence is waning on earth. One should preserve as carefully as possible the little that is left of it, nor try to seduce into poetry those who much prefer to read books about horses with instantaneous photographs in them.

"For, after all, what sight is more pitiful than life making an attempt at art? We artists despise no one more thoroughly than the dilettante, the red-blooded man, who thinks he can be an artist occasionally and on the side. I assure you, this kind of disdain is one of my own most personal experiences. I find myself in company in an aristocratic house, we eat, drink, and converse, and understand each other perfectly, and I feel glad and grateful to be able to disappear for a time among harmless and regular people as a normal man. Suddenly — this has happened to me — an officer rises, a lieutenant, a handsome, well-built fellow,

of whom I should never have suspected an action unworthy of his honorable dress, and begs in unambiguous words for permission to communicate to us a few verses which he has manufactured. With a smile of consternation the permission is given him, and he carries out his purpose, reading his composition from a slip of paper which he has till then kept hidden in his coat-tail,—something about music and love;—in short, as deep in feeling as it is ineffective. Now in the name of all the world: a lieutenant! One of the lords of the earth! *He* surely doesn't need it! . . . Well, the result is inevitable: long faces, silence, a little artificial applause, and the profoundest discomfort round about. The first spiritual fact of which I become conscious is that I feel myself an accomplice in the upsetting of the company by this indiscreet young man; and sure enough: I too, upon whose province he has encroached, catch glances of mockery and scepticism. But the second fact is that my opinion of this man, for whose whole being I had just felt the most honest respect, suddenly falls, falls, falls . . . A compassionate benevolence seizes me. With other courageous and good-natured gentlemen I step up to him and encourage him. ' Congratulations,' I say, ' what a delightful talent! Really, that was most charming.' And I am not far from clapping him on the shoulder. But is benevolence the feeling that one should have toward a lieutenant? . . . His own fault! There he stood and in great embarrassment atoned for the erroneous idea that one may pluck a leaf, just one, from the bay-tree of art, without paying for it with one's life. No, there I agree with my colleague, the criminal banker. But tell me, Lisaveta, don't you think I am endowed with the eloquence of a Hamlet today?"

"Are you through now, Tonio Kröger?"

"No. But I will say no more."

"Nor do you need to.—Do you expect an answer?"

"Have you any?"

"I should think I had.—I have listened closely to you, Tonio, from beginning to end, and I will give you the

answer which fits everything you have said this afternoon, and which is the solution of the problem that has disquieted you so. Well, then! The solution is this, that you, just as you sit there, are simply an ordinary man."

"Am I?" he asked, collapsing a little.

"That is a cruel blow, isn't it? It must be. And therefore I will soften my sentence a little, for I can do so. You are an ordinary man astray, Tonio Kröger,—an erring commoner."

—Silence. Then he stood up resolutely and reached for hat and cane.

"I thank you, Lisaveta Ivanovna; now I can go home in peace. *I am finished.*"

V

Toward autumn Tonio Kröger said to Lisaveta Ivanovna,

"Yes, I am going away now, Lisaveta; I must take an airing, and I am going off, going to take to the open."

"Well, how is it, Little Father, will it be your royal pleasure to return to Italy?"

"Good gracious, go on with your Italy, Lisaveta! Italy is indifferent to me to the point of contempt. It is a long time since I imagined I belonged there. Art, eh? Velvety blue sky, fiery wine, and sweet sensuality . . . In short, I don't like it. I resign. The whole *bellezza* makes me nervous. Nor I don't like all these frightfully lively human beings down there with their black animal eyes. None of the Romance peoples have any conscience in their eyes. . . . No, now I am going up to Denmark for a while."

"To Denmark?"

"Yes. And I promise myself benefit from it. Chance kept me from ever going there, close as I was to the boundary all through my youth, and yet I have always known and loved the place. I suppose I must have this affection for the north from my father, for my mother was really fonder of the *bellezza,* that is, provided she

didn't find everything utterly immaterial. But take the books that are written up there, those deep, pure, humorous books, Lisaveta — to me there is nothing like them and I love them. Take the Scandinavian meals, those incomparable meals that you can only stand in a strong salt air (I don't know whether I can stand them at all any more), and that I'm a little familiar with from my own home, for that's just the way we eat at home. Or just simply take the names, the personal names that adorn the people up there, and that we also had in large numbers at home, take a name like Ingeborg,— a harp-chord of the most immaculate poesy. And then the sea — they have the Baltic up there! . . . In short, I am going up there, Lisaveta. I wish to see the Baltic again, hear these names again, read those books on the spot; and I wish to stand on the terrace of Kronborg, where the ghost appeared to Hamlet and brought distress and death upon the poor, noble young man . . ."

"How are you going to go, Tonio, if I may ask? By what route?"

"The usual one," he said with a shrug of the shoulders and a visible blush. "Yes, I shall touch upon my — my point of departure, Lisaveta, after the lapse of thirteen years, and that may be rather comic.

Lisaveta smiled.

"That is what I wanted to hear, Tonio Kröger. And so, go with God. And don't fail to write to me, too, do you hear? I promise myself an eventful letter from your trip to — Denmark."

VI

And Tonio Kröger journeyed northward. He traveled comfortably (for he was wont to say that any one who has so much more distress of soul than other people may justly claim a little external comfort), and he did not rest until the towers of the cramped city which had been his starting-point rose before him in the gray air. There he made a brief, strange sojourn . . .

A dreary afternoon was already turning into evening as the train pulled into the narrow, smoke-blackened, queerly familiar train-shed; under the dirty glass roof the thick smoke still gathered into roundish clumps and floated back and forth in long ragged ribbons, just as when Tonio Kröger rode away with nothing but mockery in his heart.— He attended to his baggage, ordered it brought to the hotel, and left the station.

Those were the black, immoderately broad and high two-horse cabs of the city, standing outside in a row. He did not take one; he merely looked at them as he looked at everything: the narrow gables and pointed turrets that greeted him across the nearest roofs, the fair-haired, idly awkward people round about him, with their broad yet rapid speech — and a nervous laughter rose up in him that was secretly allied to sobbing.— He went on foot, quite slowly, with the incessant pressure of the moist wind on his face, over the bridge on whose balustrade mythological figures stood, and then along the harbor for some distance.

Good heavens, how tiny and crooked the whole place seemed! Had these narrow gable-fringed streets risen to the town in such comical steepness through all those years? The smoke-stacks and masts of the ships swayed gently in the breeze and in the twilight on the murky river. Should he go up yonder street, the one on which stood the house that he had in mind? No, tomorrow. He was so sleepy now. His head was heavy from the journey, and slow, nebulous thoughts crossed his mind.

At times, during these thirteen years, when his stomach was out of order, he had dreamed that he was again at home in the echoing old house on the slanting street, and that his father was there again too, chiding him severely because of his degenerate mode of life,— which censure he regularly regarded as quite proper. And this present moment now had nothing to distinguish it from one of those illusory and unrending dream-fabrics, in which one may ask himself whether this be hallucination or reality, and of

necessity and with deep conviction declare for the latter, only to wake up after all . . . He walked through the sparsely peopled, draughty streets, lowering his head against the wind, and moved like a somnambulist in the direction of the hotel, the best in the city, where he intended to spend the night. A bow-legged man, carrying a pole surmounted by a flame, walked along before him with a rocking sailor's gait, lighting the gas-lamps.

How *did* he feel? What was all this that glowed so darkly and painfully under the ashes of his weariness, without becoming a clear flame? Hush, hush, and not a word! No words! Fain would he have spent a long time walking thus in the wind through the dim, dreamily familiar streets. But everything was so cramped and so close together. It took no time to reach one's goal.

In the upper city there were arc-lights and they were just beginning to glow. There was the hotel, and there were the two black lions before it that had frightened him so as a child. They still looked at each other just as if they were about to sneeze; but they seemed to have grown much smaller since that day.—Tonio Kröger passed between them.

As he came on foot, he was received without much ceremony. The porter and a very elegant gentleman in black who received the guests, and who was forever thrusting either cuff back into its sleeve with his little finger, surveyed him searchingly and critically from his crown to his boots in the visible effort to make something of a social diagnosis of him, to determine his civil and religious classification, and to assign to him some definite place in their esteem, without, however, being able to reach a satisfying result; wherefore they resolved upon a moderate politeness. A waiter, a mild-mannered creature with light blond strips of side-whiskers, a dress-coat shiny with age, and rosettes on his noiseless shoes, led him up two flights to a room furnished neatly and patriarchally, whose window opened up in the twilight a picturesque and medieval

prospect of courts, gables, and the bizarre masses of the church near which the hotel stood. Tonio Kröger stood awhile at this window; then he seated himself with folded arms on the rambling sofa, drew his eyebrows together, and whistled to himself.

Lights were brought, and his baggage came. At the same time the mild-mannered waiter laid the registry blank on the table, and Tonio Kröger dashed off on it with head on one side something that looked like name, station, and birth-place. Hereupon he ordered something for supper, and continued to look into space from his sofa-corner. When the food stood before him, he left it untouched for a long time, but finally took a few bites and then walked up and down his room for an hour, standing still from time to time and shutting his eyes. Then he undressed with sluggish movements and went to bed. He slept long, amid confused dreams full of strange yearning.—

When he awoke, he saw his room filled with bright daylight. In perplexed haste he bethought himself where he was, and got up to open the curtains. The late summer blue of the sky, already a trifle pale, was traversed by thin cloud strips, ragged out by the wind; but the sun was shining above his native city.

He took more pains than usual with his toilet, washed and shaved with great care, and made himself as fresh and neat as if he were planning to make a call in some aristocratic, highly proper house, where it was necessary to make a smart and irreproachable impression; and during the manipulations of dressing he listened to the alarmed throbbing of his heart.

How bright it was outside. He would have felt more comfortable if there had been twilight in the streets, as when he came; but now he was to walk through the bright sunshine under the people's eyes. Would he hit upon acquaintances, be stopped and questioned, and have to give an account of how he had spent these thirteen years? No, thank the Lord, no one would know him any more, and

those who remembered him would not recognize him, for he had really altered a little in the meantime. He regarded himself attentively in the mirror, and suddenly felt more secure behind his mask, behind his prematurely work-lined face, which was older than his years . . . He sent for breakfast and then went out, out through the vestibule past the appraising glances of the porter and the elegant gentleman in black, out into the open between the two lions.

Whither was he going? He hardly knew. It was like yesterday. Scarcely did he again see himself surrounded by this queerly venerable and eternally familiar mixture of gables, turrets, arcades, and fountains, scarcely did he again feel on his face the pressure of the wind, the strong wind that brought with it a delicate and pungent aroma from far-away dreams, than something like a veil, a fabric of fog, enveloped his senses . . . The muscles of his face relaxed; and with quieted eyes he contemplated men and things. Perhaps he would awake none the less on that street corner yonder . . .

Whither was he going? It seemed to him as if the direction he took had some connection with his sad and strangely penitent dreams by night . . . To the market he went, through the vaulted arches of the city hall, where butchers weighed their wares with blood-stained hands, and to the market-place, where the high, pointed, and variegated Gothic fountain stood. There he stood still before a house, a narrow, simple house, like many others, with an open-work gable of curving lines, and became lost in contemplation of it. He read the name-plate on the door, and let his eyes rest a while on each window. Then he turned slowly away.

Whither was he going? Homeward. But he chose a roundabout way, taking a walk out beyond the gate, for there was plenty of time. He went across the Mill Rampart and the Holsten Rampart, holding his hat firmly against the wind that creaked and groaned in the trees. Then he forsook the park strip along the ramparts not far

white gods stood out on the blue wall-paper . . . That room had served as a bed-chamber. His father's mother had died there in bitter anguish, old as she was, for she was a pleasure-loving woman of the world and clung to life. And later his father too had breathed his last sigh there, the tall, correct, somewhat melancholy and meditative gentleman with the wild-flower in his button-hole . . . Tonio had sat with hot eyes at the foot of his death-bed, sincerely and completely given over to a strong, mute feeling, one of love and pain. And his mother too had knelt by the bed, his beautiful, passionate mother, quite dissolved in hot tears; whereupon she had strayed off to far-away lands with the southern artist . . . But back there, that smaller third room, now also completely filled with books over which a needy-looking individual kept watch, had been his own for many years. Thither he had returned after school, or after such a walk as he had just taken; against that wall his table had stood, in whose drawer he had treasured his first intimate and clumsy verses . . . The walnut-tree . . . A piercing sadness quivered through him. He looked sidewise through the window. The garden lay waste, but the old walnut-tree stood in its place, heavily creaking and rustling in the wind. And Tonio Kröger let his eyes rove back upon the book he held in his hands, a distinguished poetic work that he knew well. He looked down upon these black lines and sentence-groups, followed for a space the skilful flow of the text, watching it rise in creative passion to a fine point and effect and then break off with equal effect . . .

Yes, that is good work, he said, and put the volume back and turned away. Then he saw that the official was still standing, winking his eyes with an expression of mingled zeal and pensive distrust.

"An excellent collection, I see," said Tonio Kröger. "I have already gained a general idea of it. I am much indebted to you. Good day." With that he went out of the door; but it was a doubtful exit, and he clearly felt that the

white gods stood out on the blue wall-paper . . . That room had served as a bed-chamber. His father's mother had died there in bitter anguish, old as she was, for she was a pleasure-loving woman of the world and clung to life. And later his father too had breathed his last sigh there, the tall, correct, somewhat melancholy and meditative

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From the Painting by Benno Becker

[illegible] closest to you. Good day." With that he went out of the door; but it was a doubtful exit, and he clearly felt that the

official, full of disquiet at this visit, would keep on standing and winking for a quarter of an hour.

He felt no inclination to penetrate farther. He had been at home. Upstairs in the great rooms beyond the colonnade there were strangers living, he could see; for the head of the stairs was shut off by a glass door which had not formerly been there, and some name-plate or other was on it. He went away, down the stairs and over the echoing hall, and left his father's house. In one corner of a restaurant he consumed a heavy, hearty meal, his thoughts ever turned inward, and then he returned to the hotel.

"I am through," he said to the elegant gentleman in black. "I leave this afternoon." And he sent for his bill, also the carriage that was to take him to the harbor, to the steamer for Copenhagen. Then he went up to his room and sat down at the table, sat quietly erect, resting his cheek on his hand and looking at the table with unseeing eyes. Later on he paid his bill and got his effects ready. At the designated time the carriage was announced, and Tonio Kröger went down-stairs in readiness to go.

Below, at the foot of the stairs, the elegant gentleman in black was waiting for him.

"Your pardon," he said, thrusting back either cuff into its sleeve with the little finger . . . "Excuse me, sir, that we must still claim a minute of your time. Mr. Seehaase, the owner of the hotel, begs for a very brief conversation with you. A mere formality . . . He is back yonder . . . Will you have the goodness to go with me . . . It is *only* Mr. Seehaase, the owner of the hotel."

And he led Tonio Kröger with gestures of invitation toward the back part of the vestibule. There the owner of the hotel was indeed standing. Tonio Kröger knew him by sight from his youth. He was short, fat, and bow-legged. His cropped side-whiskers had grown white; but he still wore a Tuxedo of wide cut and in addition a small green-embroidered velvet cap. Nor was he alone. Near him, at a small writing-desk fastened to the wall, stood a helmeted

policeman, whose gloved right hand rested on a curiously bescribbled piece of paper that lay before him on the desk, and whose honest soldier-face looked at Tonio Kröger as if he expected that the latter must sink into the ground at sight of him.

Tonio Kröger looked from one to the other and applied himself to waiting.

"You come from Munich?" asked the policeman at last with a good-natured and ponderous voice.

Tonio Kröger assented.

"You are traveling to Copenhagen?"

"Yes, I am on the way to a Danish seashore resort."

"Seashore?—Well, you must show your papers," said the policeman, uttering the last word with particular satisfaction.

"Papers . . ." He had no papers. He drew out his pocketbook and looked into it; but besides some bills there was nothing in it but the proof-sheets of a story, which he had intended to correct at his journey's end. He was not fond of dealings with officials and had never had a passport filled out . . .

"I am sorry," he said, "but I have no papers with me."

"Oh," said the policeman . . . "None at all?—What is your name?"

Tonio Kröger answered him.

"Is that true?" said the policeman, straightening up and suddenly opening his nostrils as far as he could . . .

"Quite true," answered Tonio Kröger.

"And what are you?"

Tonio Kröger swallowed and named his calling with firm voice.—Mr. Seehaase raised his head and looked curiously up into his face.

"Hm," said the policeman. "And you claim not to be identical with an individial named—" He said "individial" and then spelled from the curiously bescribbled piece of paper a most puzzling and romantic name, which seemed to have been freakishly composed of the sounds of

various languages and which Tonio Kröger had forgotten the next moment. "— Who," he continued, "of unknown parentage and uncertain competence, is being sought by the Munich police on account of various swindles and other crimes, and is probably trying to flee to Denmark?"

"I do more than claim," said Tonio Kröger, making a nervous movement with his shoulders.— This created a certain impression.

"What? Oh yes, quite so," said the officer. "But that you shouldn't be able to show any papers at all."

Now Mr. Seehaase interposed conciliatingly.

"The whole thing is only a formality," he said, "nothing more. You must reflect that the official is only doing his duty. If you can identify yourself in any way . . . Any document . . ."

All were silent. Should he put an end to the affair by making himself known, by revealing to Mr. Seehaase that he was no swindler of uncertain competence, by birth no gipsy in a green wagon, but the son of Consul Kröger, of the Kröger family? No, he had no desire for that. And did not these men of the civic order really have a little right on their side? To a certain extent he was quite in agreement with them . . . He shrugged his shoulders and remained silent.

"What is that you have there?" asked the officer. "There in that portfoly?"

"Here? Nothing. Proof-sheets," answered Tonio Kröger.

"Proof-sheets? How so? Let me see a minute."

And Tonio Kröger handed them over to him. The policeman spread them out on the desk and began to read them. Mr. Seehaase also stepped closer and participated in the reading. Tonio Kröger looked over their shoulders to see where they were reading. It was a good passage, a point and effect which he had worked out superbly. He was content with himself.

"You see," he said. "There stands my name. I wrote this, and now it is being published, you understand."

"Well, that is sufficient," said Mr. Seehaase determinedly, and he gathered up the sheets, folded them, and returned them. "That must suffice, Peterson," he repeated brusquely, furtively closing his eyes and shaking his head as a sign to desist. "We must not detain the gentleman longer. The carriage is waiting. I earnestly beg you to excuse the little inconvenience, sir. The official has of course only done his duty, but I told him at once that he was on the wrong scent . . ."

Did you? thought Tonio Kröger.

The officer did not seem to agree entirely; he made some objection about "individial" and "papers." But Mr. Seehaase led his guest back through the vestibule amid repeated expressions of regret, escorted him out between the two lions to his carriage, and closed the carriage door himself with attestations of his esteem. And then the ridiculously broad and high cab rolled down the steep streets to the harbor, rocking, rattling, and rumbling . . .

This was Tonio Kröger's strange sojourn in his native city.

VII

Night was falling, and the moon was already rising bathed in silvery light, when Tonio Kröger's ship reached the open sea. He stood by the bowsprit, his mantle shielding him from the steadily freshening breeze, and looked down into the dark roving and surging of the strong, smooth wave-bodies below him, as they rocked about each other, met each other with a splash, separated with a rush in unexpected directions, or suddenly flashed white with foam . . .

A swaying, quietly rapturous mood came over him. He had of course been a little depressed because they had wanted to arrest him at home as a swindler — although to a certain extent he had found it quite proper. But then after going aboard he had watched, as he and his father had sometimes done, the loading of the cargo with which the deep hold of the boat was filled, amid cries of mingled

Low German and Danish, and seen them let down not merely bales and boxes, but also a polar bear and a royal tiger in heavily barred cages, doubtless coming from Hamburg and destined for some Danish menagerie; and this had diverted him. Then while the boat was gliding along the river between flat banks he had completely forgotten officer Peterson's interrogatory; and all that had gone before, his sweet, sad, and regretful dreams during the night, the walk he had taken, the sight of the walnut-tree,—these had again become powerful in his soul. And now that the sea opened out he saw from afar the shore on which as a boy he had been privileged to listen to the summer dreams of the sea; saw the gleam of the light-house and the lights of the seashore hotel where he had stayed with his parents . . . The Baltic! He leaned his head against the strong salt breeze that came to him free and unchecked, enveloped his ears, and produced in him a gentle vertigo, a slight stupefaction, in which the recollection of all evil, of torment and erring ways, of great plans and arduous labors, became lazily and blissfully submerged. And in the roaring, splashing, foaming, and groaning round about him he fancied he heard the rustling and creaking of the old walnut-tree, and the screeching of a garden gate . . . It grew darker and darker.

"De stars, my gracious, just look at de stars," suddenly remarked in a ponderous sing-song a voice that seemed to come from inside a barrel. He knew the voice. It belonged to a reddish-blond, simply dressed man with reddened eyelids and a clammy look, as if he had just taken a bath. At supper in the cabin he had been Tonio Kröger's neighbor and with hesitant and modest motions he had taken unto himself astonishing quantities of lobster-omelette. Now he was leaning against the rail beside his new acquaintance and looking up at the sky, holding his chin with thumb and forefinger. Without doubt he was in one of those extraordinary and solemnly contemplative moods in which the barriers between men fall away, in which the

heart opens even to strangers, and the mouth utters things which would otherwise close it in modesty . . .

"Look, sir, just look at de stars. Dere dey stand and twinkle, upon my word de whole sky is full of dem. And now let me ask you, when we look up and reflect dat many of dem are supposed to be a hundred times bigger dan de eart', how do we feel? We men have invented de telegraph and de telephone, and so many achievements of modern life, yes, dat we have. But when we look up dere, den we have to recognize and understand dat after all we're only vermin, miserable vermin and not'ing else — am I right or wrong, sir? Yes, we are vermin," he answered himself, and nodded up at the firmament, humble and crushed.

Ouch . . . no, he has no literature in him, thought Tonio Kröger. And forthwith something that he had recently been reading occurred to him, an article by a famous French author on cosmological and psychological philosophy; it had been very elegant chatter.

He gave the young man something like an answer to his deep-felt remark, and they continued to talk, leaning over the rail and looking out into the restlessly illuminated, agitated evening. It turned out that the traveling companion was a young merchant from Hamburg, who was using his vacation for this pleasure trip . . .

"Go and take a little trip," he was saying, "to Copenhagen wit de *Dampfoot,* I tought, and so here I am, and so far it's very nice. But dose lobster-omelettes, you know, dat wasn't de ting, you'll see, for it's going to be a stormy night, de captain said so himself, and wit such an indigestible supper in your stomach dat's no joke . . ."

Tonio Kröger listened to all this complaisant folly with a secretly friendly feeling.

"Yes," he said, "they eat far too much up here anyway. That makes them lazy and melancholy."

"Melancholy?" repeated the young man, looking at him in consternation . . . "I suppose you are a stranger here?" he suddenly inquired . . .

"Oh yes, I come from far away," answered Tonio Kröger with a vague and evasive gesture.

"But you are right," said the young man; "God knows you are right about melancholy. I am almost always melancholy, but especially on such evenings as dis, when de stars are in de sky." And again he propped up his chin on thumb and forefinger.

He undoubtedly writes verses, thought Tonio Kröger, merchant's verses full of deeply honest feeling . . .

The evening wore on, and the wind had now become so violent that it interfered with conversation. So they resolved to sleep a little, and wished each other good night.

Tonio Kröger stretched himself out on the narrow bunk in his cabin, but he found no rest. The strong wind and its pungent aroma had agitated him strangely, and his heart was restless as if in anxious expectation of something sweet. And the shock to the ship which resulted when it slid down a steep wave-slope and the screw raced convulsively out of water, caused him severe nausea. He dressed again completely and mounted into the open air.

Clouds were racing past the moon. The sea was dancing. There were no round and uniform waves coming on in order, but as far as one could see, in the pale and flickering light, the sea was torn up, lashed and stirred into fragments; its flamelike, gigantic tongues licked and leaped into the air, beside foam-filled abysses it cast up jagged and improbable forms, and seemed with the force of monstrous arms to hurl the spume in mad playfulness to invisible heights. The ship had a toilsome journey; crashing, rolling, and groaning it worked its way through the commotion, and now and again one could hear the polar bear and the tiger, who had suffered from the high sea, roaring in the hold. A man in an oilskin cape, the hood drawn over his head, and a lantern buckled about his body, was walking spread-legged up and down the deck, balancing with difficulty. But there at the stern, bending low over the rail, stood the young man from Hamburg, taking it very hard

indeed. "Good heavens," he said in a hollow and faltering voice, as he became aware of Tonio Kröger, "just see de tumult of de elements, sir." But then he was interrupted and turned hastily away.

Tonio Kröger held on to some taut cable and looked out into all this uncontrollable exuberance. An exultation winged its way upward within him, and it seemed to him powerful enough to drown out both tempest and flood. A song to the sea, inspired by love, rang out within him. Wild comrade of my youth's delight, once more our spirits now unite . . . But then the poem was at an end. It was not completed, was not rounded off, not welded calmly into a unified whole. His heart was alive . . .

Long he stood thus; then he stretched out on a bench near the deck-cabin and looked up at the sky in which the stars were flickering. He even slumbered a little. And when the cold spray flew into his face, it seemed in his half wakeful state like a caress.

Vertical chalk cliffs, ghostlike in the moonlight, came in sight and drew near; that was the Island of Moen. And again slumber intervened, interrupted by showers of salt spray which sharply stung the face and benumbed the features . . . When he fully awoke, it was already day, a light-gray, bracing day, and the green sea was quieter. At breakfast he saw the young merchant again, and the latter blushed violently, probably for shame at having uttered in the dark such poetic and disgraceful things, rubbed up his small reddish moustache with all five fingers, and returned Tonio Kröger's salutation with a curt military greeting, to avoid him anxiously thenceforward.

And Tonio Kröger landed in Denmark. He arrived formally in Copenhagen, gave a tip to every one who pretended he could lay claim to it, spent three days in tramping the town with his hotel as a starting-point and carrying his Baedeker open before him, and behaved just like the better class of strangers who desire to increase their information. He studied the King's Newmarket with the

"horse" in the middle of it, looked respectfully up the pillars of Our Lady's, stood long before Thorwaldsen's noble and lovely sculpture, climbed the Round Tower, visited castles, and spent two lively evenings in the Tivoli. But all this was not really what he saw.

On the houses, which frequently had the very look of the old houses of his native city with their curved and pierced gables, he would see names that were familiar to him from olden times, which seemed to him to signify something tender and precious, and at the same time included something like reproach, lament, and longing for things lost. And everywhere, while breathing in retarded, meditative draughts the moist sea-air, he saw eyes as blue, hair as blond, faces of just the same type and formation as those he had seen in the strangely grievous and regretful dreams of the night spent in his native city. It not seldom happened on the open street that a glance, a ringing word, a peal of laughter would strike his very marrow . . .

He could not long endure the gay city. An unrest, sweet and foolish, half recollection and half expectation, stirred him, together with the desire to lie quietly somewhere along the shore and not have to play the eagerly observing tourist. So he took ship again and sailed on a gloomy day (the sea was black) northward up the coast of Seeland to Elsinore. From there he continued his journey without delay by carriage along the high road for three quarters of an hour, always a little above the sea, until he stopped at his final and real goal, the little white summer hotel with green blinds which stood in the midst of a settlement of low cottages, and whose wooden-roofed tower looked out on the strand and toward the Swedish coast. Here he got out, took possession of the sunny room that had been kept ready for him, filled book-shelf and wardrobe with the effects he had brought with him, and prepared to live here a while.

VIII

September was already at hand; there were no longer many guests in Aalsgaard. At the meals in the great timber-ceiled dining-hall on the ground floor, whose high windows opened out upon the sun-porch and the sea, the hostess always presided, an elderly spinster with white hair, colorless eyes, delicately pink cheeks, and a quavering, chirping voice, who always tried to group her red hands to advantage on the white table-cloth. A short-necked old gentleman with ice-gray sailor's beard and dark-blue face was there, a fish-dealer from the capital, who understood German. He seemed to be wholly stopped up as to nose, and inclined to apoplexy, for he drew short, jerky breaths and raised from time to time his beringed forefinger to one of his nostrils, in order to shut it and procure the other one a little air by means of vigorous snorting. None the less he paid constant court to the brandy bottle, which stood before him at breakfast as well as at the other meals. There was no one else except three tall American youths with their don or tutor, who silently adjusted his glasses and played football with them by day. They parted their reddish yellow hair in the middle and had long, impassive faces.

"Please, give me the wurst-things there,"* the one would say.

"That's not wurst, that's schinken," remarked another, and this was the only contribution which either they or the tutor made to the conversation; for otherwise they sat in silence and drank hot water.

Tonio Kröger would have desired no other sort of company at table. He enjoyed his peace, listened to the Danish gutturals and the bright and dark vowels, when the fish-dealer and the hostess occasionally conversed together, exchanged now and then with the former some simple remark about the barometer, and would then get up to pass

* Mr. Mann's English.— TRANSLATOR.

through the verandah and down on to the shore again, where he had already spent long morning hours.

Sometimes it was quiet and summerlike there. The sea would rest lazily and smoothly, in blue, bottle-green, and reddish streaks, with silvery, glittering reflections playing over it, while the seaweed dried into hay in the sunshine, and the jelly-fish lay there and evaporated. It smelled a little of decay and also of the pitch of the fishing-boat against which Tonio Kröger leaned his back as he sat on the sand, turning so as to have the open horizon and not the Swedish coast before his eyes; but the light breath of the sea floated pure and fresh over everything.

And gray, stormy days came. The waves bowed their heads like steers lowering their horns to butt, and rushed furiously against the strand, which was flooded to a great height and covered with shining sea-grass, shells, and driftwood. Between the long lines of wave-crests the pale green, foam-flecked troughs extended under the lowering sky; but yonder where the sun hung behind the clouds, a whitish velvet sheen lay on the waters.

Tonio Kröger stood enveloped by wind and clamor, lost in this eternal, ponderous, deafening roar that he loved so much. If he turned and went away, on a sudden it seemed quite still and warm about him. But at his back, he knew, was the sea; it called him, enticed him, spoke to him. And he would smile.

He would go inland through the solitude along meadow paths, and soon birch woods would receive him, extending far over the rolling country. He would sit down in the moss and lean against a tree from which he could see a patch of ocean between the trunks. At times the wind would carry to him the noise of the surf, like distant boards falling on each other. The caw of crows above the tree-tops, hoarse, desolate, forlorn . . . He had a book on his knees, but he read not a line in it. He was enjoying a deep oblivion, a floating in perfect freedom over space and time; and only occasionally did it seem as if some pain quivered

through his heart, a short, piercing feeling of longing or regret, which he was too lazy and too absorbed to question as to its name and origin.

So passed many a day; he could not have said how many, and had no desire to know. But then came a day when something happened; happened while the sun stood in the sky and people were present, and Tonio Kröger was not even especially astonished at it.

The very beginning of this day took a festive and delightful form. Tonio Kröger awoke very early and quite suddenly, started up from sleep with a subtle and vague fear, and thought he was looking upon a miracle, into some enchanted, fairy-like illumination. His room, with a glass door and a balcony looking out on the Sound, and divided by a thin white gauze curtain into living-room and bedroom, was papered in delicate colors and furnished with light, bright articles, so that it always made a cheerful, sunny impression. But now his sleep-drunk eyes saw an unearthly transfiguration and illumination before him, saw his room immersed to the farthest corner in an unspeakably lovely, hazy rose-glow, which gilded walls and furnishings and caused the gauze curtain to gleam with a mild ruddy light . . . For a long time Tonio Kröger did not understand what was happening. But when he stood at the glass door and looked out, he saw that it was the rising sun.

For several days it had been dark and rainy; but now the sky, like a taut canopy of pale-blue silk, rose in shimmering purity over sea and land, and the sun's disk, beflecked and surrounded by cloud-strips shot with red and gold, was rising impressively out of the sea, which with its flickering ripples seemed to quiver and to glow beneath it . . . So the day began, and in bewildered happiness Tonio Kröger flung himself into his clothes, breakfasted downstairs on the verandah before any one else, swam some distance out into the Sound from the little wooden bath-house, and then walked for an hour along the shore. When he returned, several wagons that looked like omnibuses were stopping

before the hotel, and from the dining-room he could see that not only in the adjoining living-room, where the piano stood, but also on the verandah and the terrace in front of it, a great company of people, dressed in provincial style, were sitting at round tables and consuming beer and sandwiches amid lively conversation. There were whole families of old and young people, and even a few children.

At the second breakfast (the table was loaded down with cold viands, smoked, salted, and baked) Tonio Kröger inquired what was going on.

"Guests," said the fish-dealer. "Picnickers and dancers from Elsinore. Aye, God help us, we shan't be able to sleep this night. There will be dancing, dancing and music, and it is to be feared that it will last a long time. It is a family gathering, picnic and reunion at once, in short a subscription dance or something of the sort, and they are going to enjoy the fine day. They have come by boat and wagon, and now they are lunching. Later they will go on across country, but in the evening they will come back, and then there will be dancing in the hall here. Yes, damn it and curse it, we shan't close an eye . . ."

"That will be a nice change," said Tonio Kröger.

Hereupon nothing further was said for some time. The hostess grouped her red fingers, the fish-dealer blew through his right nostril in order to get a little air, and the Americans drank hot water and pulled long faces over it.

Then on a sudden this happened: *Hans Hansen and Ingeborg Holm went through the hall.—*

Tonio Kröger, comfortably weary after his bath and his rapid walk, was leaning back in his chair, eating smoked salmon on toast; he sat facing the verandah and the sea. And suddenly the door opened and the two entered hand in hand—sauntering and without haste. Ingeborg, the fair-haired Inga, was dressed in bright colors, as she was wont to be in M. Knaak's dancing class. The light, flowered dress only reached to her ankles, and about her shoulders she wore a broad, V-shaped fichu of white tulle, leaving her

soft, supple throat free. Her hat hung on one arm by its knotted ribbons. She was perhaps a little less grown-up than of old, simply wearing her wonderful braid wound about her head; but Hans Hansen looked as he always did. He had on his seaman's jacket with the gold buttons, over which the broad blue collar lay on shoulders and back; the sailor's cap with the short ribbons he was holding in one hand, swinging it carelessly back and forth. Ingeborg kept her elongated eyes cast down, perhaps a little embarrassed by the gaze of the breakfasters. But Hans Hansen turned his head squarely toward the table, as if defying the world, and mustered with his steel-blue eyes one face after another, challengingly and as it were contemptuously; he even dropped Ingeborg's hand and swung his cap back and forth more vehemently, to show what sort of a man he was. So the couple walked past Tonio Kröger's eyes, with the quiet blue sea as a background, traversed the entire length of the hall, and vanished through the opposite door into the music-room.

This took place at half past eleven, and while the regular guests were still at their meal, the company in the adjoining room and on the verandah broke up and left the hotel by the side entrance, without any one having set foot in the dining-room. They could be heard climbing into the wagons outside amid jest and laughter, and one conveyance after the other crunchingly got under way and rolled off along the high road . . .

"So they are coming back?" asked Tonio Kröger.

"That they are," said the fish-dealer. "And God help us. They have ordered music, you must know, and I sleep right over the hall."

"That will be a nice change," repeated Tonio Kröger. Then he stood up and went out.

He spent the day as he had spent the others, on the shore and in the woods, holding a book in his lap and blinking at the sun. He entertained only one idea: that they would come back and have a dance in the hall, as the fish-dealer

had promised; and he did nothing but look forward to this with an anxious and sweet joy such as he had not experienced for many long, dead years. Once, by some chain of ideas, he had a fleeting recollection of a distant acquaintance, of Adalbert the novelist, who knew what he wanted and had gone to the café to escape the spring. And he shrugged his shoulders at him . . .

Dinner was served earlier than usual, and supper also was eaten earlier than otherwise and in the music-room, because preparations for the ball were already going on in the hall: in such a festive manner was everything brought into disorder. Then, after it had grown dark and Tonio Kröger was sitting in his room, there was noise and bustle again on the road and in the house. The picnickers were returning; yes, and from the direction of Elsinore new guests came by bicycle and carriage, and already one could hear in the room below a fiddle tuning up and a clarinet executing nasal runs by way of practice . . . Everything promised to make it a brilliant ball.

Now the little orchestra opened up with a march: the muffled sounds came up in steady rhythm: they were opening the dance with a polonaise. Tonio Kröger sat still awhile and listened. But when he heard the march-time change to a waltz, he got up and glided noiselessly out of his room.

From the corridor outside his room one could go by a stairway to the side-entrance of the hotel, and from there to the sun-porch without entering a room. He took this course, softly and stealthily, as if treading forbidden paths, and cautiously felt his way through the darkness, irresistibly attracted by this stupid, blissfully swaying music, whose tones were already reaching his ear clear and unmuffled.

The verandah was empty and unlighted, but the glass door to the hall, where the two great oil lamps were shining brightly before their polished reflectors, stood open. Thither he crept on tiptoe, and the enjoyment of stealthily

standing here in the dark and watching unseen those who were dancing in the light made his flesh tingle. Hastily and eagerly he sent his glances in search of that one couple . . .

The merriment of the festivity already seemed to be full-blown, although the ball had begun scarcely a half hour before; but of course they had been warm and excited when they arrived, after spending the entire day together, carefree and happy. In the music-room, which Tonio Kröger could see if he ventured to step forward a little, several elderly gentlemen had gathered to smoke and drink over their cards; while others were sitting beside their spouses on the plush chairs in the foreground and along the walls, looking on at the dancing. They held their hands propped on their spread knees, and blew out their cheeks with a well-to-do air, while the mothers, with bonnets on their parted hair, hands folded on their stomachs, and head on one side, looked into the swarm of young people. A platform had been erected against one of the long side walls, and here the musicians were doing their best. There was even a trumpet, which pealed with a certain hesitant cautiousness, as if afraid of its own voice, but which none the less constantly broke and gave out . . . Whirling and surging the couples moved about each other, while others promenaded arm in arm. They were not in gala dress, but only as on a summer afternoon spent in the open: the cavaliers in suits of provincial cut, which one could see had been spared all week, and the young girls in light, bright dresses with bouquets of wild flowers on their bodices. A few children were in the hall, too, and they danced together child-fashion, not even stopping with the music. A long-legged person in a swallow-tailed coat, a provincial lion with monocle and curled hair, mail clerk or something like it, looking like the comic figure of a Danish novel in the flesh, seemed to be the manager of the festivities and director of the ball. Precipitate, perspiring, and with his whole soul in his task, he was everywhere at once; he

" sashayed " officiously through the hall, artfully treading on the balls of his feet, which were shod with shining, pointed military boots, and setting them down crosswise in some intricate fashion, swung his arms in the air, made arrangements, called for music, clapped his hands,— and through all this the ribbons of the great, gay-colored bow which was fastened to his shoulder in token of his dignity, and toward which he occasionally turned his head lovingly, fluttered in the air behind him.

Yes, they were there, those two that had passed Tonio Kröger that day in the sunlight; he saw them again and felt a joyful shock as he perceived them both almost at once. Here stood Hans Hansen, quite close to him, next to the door; with feet spread and a little bent forward he was deliberately consuming a large piece of Madeira cake, hollowing his hand under his chin to catch the crumbs. And there against the wall sat Ingeborg Holm, fair-haired Inga, and the mail clerk just " sashaying " up to her to ask her for a dance with a choice gesture, consisting in laying one hand on his back and thrusting the other into his bosom; but she shook her head and motioned that she was too much out of breath and must rest a little, whereupon he sat down at her side.

Tonio Kröger looked at the two for whom he had suffered love of yore — Hans and Ingeborg. It was they not so much by virtue of single features and the similarity of their dress, as on the strength of their likeness in race and type, this bright, steel-blue-eyed, fair-haired stock, which suggested purity, serenity, and cheerfulness, and an at once proud and simple, inviolable reserve . . . He looked at them, saw Hans Hansen stand there in his sailor suit as bold and as shapely as ever, broad of shoulder and narrow of hip, saw how Ingeborg laughingly tossed her head in a certain saucy fashion, and carried her hand, a little girl's hand by no means especially slender or dainty, up to her back hair in a certain fashion, so that the light sleeve slipped down from her elbow,— and suddenly homesickness

shook his breast with such pain that he involuntarily retreated farther into the darkness, lest any one see the quivering of his countenance.

Had I forgotten you? he asked. No, never! Not you, Hans, nor you, blond Inga. It was you for whom I worked, and when I heard applause, I secretly looked about me to see if you had any part in it . . . Have you now read *Don Carlos,* Hans Hansen, as you promised me at your garden gate? Do not do so, I no longer ask it of you. What is the king to you, weeping because he is lonely? You must not make your bright eyes dull and dream-dimmed by staring into verses and melancholy . . . To be like you! To begin once more, grow up like you, honest, happy, and simple, regular, orderly, and in agreement with God and the world, to be loved by the innocent and happy, to take you to wife, Ingeborg Holm, and have a son like you, Hans Hansen,—to live, love, and laud in blessed prosaic bliss, free from the curse of knowledge and of creative torment! . . . Begin again? But it would do no good. It would turn out the same way again,—everything would be just as it has been this time. For some go astray of necessity, because there is absolutely no right way for them.

Now the music stopped, there was an intermission, and refreshments were served. The mail clerk hurried about in person with a tea-tray of herring salad, serving the ladies; but before Ingeborg Holm he actually dropped on one knee as he offered her the dish, making her blush for joy.

The people in the hall now began to be aware of the spectator in the doorway, after all, and strange, searching glances came upon him from pretty, heated faces; but he stood his ground. Ingeborg and Hans, too, passed their eyes over him almost at the same moment, with that complete indifference which almost has the appearance of contempt. Suddenly, however, he became conscious that from somewhere a glance had reached him and was resting on him . . . He turned his head, and at once his eyes met

the ones he had felt. A girl stood not far from him, with a pale, narrow, delicate face which he had noticed before. She had not danced much, the cavaliers had not paid much attention to her, and he had seen her sitting alone against the wall with bitterly closed lips. And she stood alone now, too. She wore a bright, filmy dress, like the others, but under the diaphanous goods her bare shoulders looked sharp and scanty, and the lean neck went down so far between these pitiful shoulders that the quiet girl seemed almost a little deformed. She held her hands in their thin short gloves in front of her flat breast so that the fingertips barely touched. With lowered head she looked up at Tonio Kröger out of black, swimming eyes. He turned away . . .

Here stood Hans and Ingeborg quite close to him. He had sat down beside her,—she was perhaps his sister,—and surrounded by other red-cheeked children of men they ate and drank, chattered merrily, called out teasing remarks to each other with ringing voices, and let their laughter peal out. Could he not approach them a little? Could he not direct to him or her a jest that would come to his mind, and that they must at least answer with a smile? It would make him happy, he longed for it; he would then return more contentedly to his room, with the consciousness of having established some little community with them. He thought out what he might say; but he did not find the courage to say it. And then too it was as of old: they would not understand him, would listen with disapproval to what he could say. For their language was not his language.

Now the dance was to begin again, it seemed. The mail clerk revealed an all-embracing activity. He hurried around and invited every one to engage partners, pushed and cleared away chairs and glasses with the aid of the waiter, gave orders to the musicians, and took some awkward ones, who did not know where to go, by the shoulders and pushed them along before him. What were they going to do? Groups of eight couples were forming sets . . . A ter-

rible memory made Tonio Kröger blush. They were dancing the quadrille.

The music began, and the couples bowed and marched past each other. The mail clerk called the figures, and he did so, by heaven, in French, and brought out the nasal sounds in an incomparably distinguished fashion. Ingeborg Holm was dancing right in front of Tonio Kröger, in the set just next to the door. She moved back and forth in front of him, forward and backward, gliding and whirling; a perfume that came from her hair or the dainty stuff of her dress reached him occasionally, and he shut his eyes with a feeling that had been so familiar to him all his life, whose aroma and bitter stimulus he had faintly discerned all these last days, and that now filled him again completely with its sweet distress. What *was* it? Longing? Tenderness? Envy, self-contempt? . . . *Moulinet des dames!* Did you laugh, blond Inga, did you laugh at me when I danced *moulinet* and made such a pitiable fool of myself? And would you laugh today, now that I have after all become something like a famous man? Yes, you would, and you would have thrice as much right as before! And if I, all by myself, had created the Nine Symphonies, The World as Will and Idea, and the Last Judgment — still you would be eternally justified in laughing . . . He looked at her, and a line occurred to him which he had long forgotten, and yet was so familiar and so akin to him: "I fain would sleep, but thou must dance." He knew so well the deep, clumsy, melancholy Scandinavian awkwardness of feeling that was expressed by it. To sleep . . . To long to live simply and wholly for the feeling that sweetly and indolently satisfies itself, without the obligation of becoming a deed and a dance — and nevertheless to dance, to have to execute nimbly and with presence of mind the hard, hard and dangerous knife-dance of art, without ever quite forgetting the humiliating contradiction that lay in having to dance while one was in love . . .

All at once the whole throng broke into mad and exu-

berant motion. The sets had broken up, and the dancers shot around jumping and gliding: the quadrille was ending with a galop. The couples flew past Tonio Kröger to the furious beat of the music, *chasséing*, hurrying, overtaking each other, with quick, breathless laughter. One couple came along, carried away by the universal race, whirling and whizzing forward. The girl had a delicate, pale face and lean, very high shoulders. And suddenly, close before him, there was a stumbling, sliding, and falling . . . The pale girl fell down. She fell so heavily and violently that it almost looked dangerous, and her cavalier fell with her. The latter must have hurt himself so painfully that he forgot his partner altogether, for he began amid grimaces to rub his knees with his hands, without getting off the floor; and the girl, seemingly quite stunned by the fall, still lay on the floor. Now Tonio Kröger stepped forward, grasped her gently by the arms, and lifted her up. Exhausted, confused, and unhappy, she looked up at him, and suddenly her delicate face was suffused with a faint flush.

"Tak! O, mange Tak!" (Thanks, Oh, many thanks), she said, and looked up at him with dark, swimming eyes.

"You should not dance any more," he said gently. Then he looked around at *them* once more, at Hans and Ingeborg, and went out, leaving the verandah and the dance, and going up to his room.

He was intoxicated by the festivities in which he had had no part, and weary with jealousy. It had been like long ago, just like long ago. With heated face he had stood in a dark spot, full of grief on your account, ye blond ones, happy and full of life, and then had gone away lonely. Some one ought to come now. Ingeborg ought to come now, ought to notice that he was gone, follow him secretly, lay her hand on his shoulder and say: Come in and join us. Be happy! I love you . . . But she came not at all. Such things did not happen. Yes, it was just like those days, and he was happy as in those days. For his heart

was alive. But what had there been during all the time in which he had become what he now was? — Stupefaction; desolation; ice; and intellect. And art! . . .

He undressed, lay down to rest, and put out the light. He whispered two names into the pillow, these few chaste Norse syllables which designated for him the real and original type of his love, suffering, and happiness, which meant life, simple and intimate emotion, home. He looked back upon the years elapsed from that time to this. He thought of the wild adventures his senses, nerves, and intellect had gone through, saw himself devoured by irony and brilliance, made stagnant and lame by knowledge, half worn out by the fevers and frosts of creative work, unstable and in torments of conscience between crass extremes, cast back and forth between sanctity and passion, exquisite, impoverished, exhausted by frigid and artificially selected exaltations, astray, laid waste, tortured, diseased — and he sobbed with repentance and homesickness.

About him it was quiet and dark. But from below the sweet, trivial waltz time of life came up to him muffled and swaying.

IX

Tonio Kröger sat in the North and wrote to Lisaveta Ivanovna, his friend, as he had promised.

Dear Lisaveta, down yonder in Arcadia, whither I shall soon return, he wrote. Here, then, is something like a letter, but it will probably disappoint you, for I am thinking of keeping it somewhat general. Not as if I had nothing to tell, or had not had this or that experience on my journey. At home, in my native town, they were actually going to arrest me . . . but of that you shall hear by word of mouth. Now I frequently have days on which I prefer making some good general observations to telling stories.

I wonder if you still remember, Lisaveta, that you once called me a commoner, a commoner astray. You called me so at a time when I was confessing my love for that which

I call Life, being led on to it by other confessions which I had allowed to escape me; and I ask myself whether you knew how closely you struck the truth in calling me so, how nearly my commonership and my love for " life " are one and the same thing. This journey has given me occasion to think about it . . .

My father, you know, was of a Norse temperament: reflective, thorough, Puritanically correct, and inclined to melancholy; my mother of nondescript exotic blood, beautiful, sensual, naïve, at once slovenly and passionate, and of an impulsive and unprincipled mind. Quite without doubt this was a mixture which involved extraordinary possibilities, and extraordinary dangers. What came of it was this: a commoner who lost his way into art, a Bohemian homesick for a model nursery, an artist with a bad conscience. For it is of course my bourgeois conscience which makes me see in all artistry, in all unusualness and all genius something deeply ambiguous, deeply dubious, deeply disreputable, and which fills me with this lovelorn weakness for the simple, candid, and agreeably normal, for the decent and mediocre.

I stand between two worlds, am at home in neither, and in consequence have rather a hard time of it. You artists call me a commoner, and commoners feel tempted to arrest me . . . I do not know which wounds me more bitterly. Commoners are stupid; but you worshippers of beauty who call me phlegmatic and without yearning, ought to reflect that there is an artistry so deep, so primordial and elemental, that no yearning seems to it sweeter and more worthy of tasting than that for the raptures of commonplaceness.

I admire the proud and cold who go adventuring on the paths of great and demoniac beauty, and scorn " man "— but I do not envy them. For if anything is capable of making a poet out of a man of letters, it is this plebeian love of mine for the human, living, and commonplace. All warmth, all goodness, all humor is born of it, and it almost

seems to me as if it were that love itself, of which it is written that a man might speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and yet without it be no more than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

What I have done is nothing, not much — as good as nothing. I shall do better things, Lisaveta — this is a promise. While I am writing, the sea's roar is coming up to me, and I close my eyes. I am looking into an unborn and shapeless world that longs to be called to life and order, I am looking into a throng of phantoms of human forms which beckon me to conjure them and set them free: some of them tragic, some of them ridiculous, and some that are both at once — and to these I am very devoted. But my deepest and most secret love belongs to the blond and blue-eyed, the bright-spirited living ones, the happy, amiable, and commonplace.

Do not speak lightly of this love, Lisaveta; it is good and fruitful. There is longing in it and melancholy envy, and a tiny bit of contempt, and an unalloyed chaste blissfulness.

LUDWIG THOMA

MATT THE HOLY (1904)

The remarkable fortunes of the Reverend Matthew Fottner of Eynhofen, Studiosus, Soldier, and later Pastor at Rappertswyl

TRANSLATED BY BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN, PH.D.

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WHOSO has six horses in the stable is a freeholder, and he sits next to the burgomaster in the tavern and is a burgess. When he sees fit to open his head and grumble about the hard times and the taxes, his words are heeded, and the small fry go about the next day telling how Harlanger, or whatever his name is, has spoken his mind for once.

Whoso has five horses or less is a farmer, and he grumbles too. But it does not have the same weight, and is not worth spreading.

But whoso has no horses, and makes a pair of lean oxen draw his plow, is a cotter and must hold his tongue. In the tavern, in the town meeting, and everywhere. His opinion is worthless, and no regular farmer pays any attention to the poor beggar.

The professor of the Cobbler-Sebastian property, house number eight in Eynhofen, George Fottner by name, was a cotter. And a beggarly one at that. As to oxen, he had one, of cows very few, but a swarm of children. Four girls and three boys, making seven according to Adam Reese*; and when there was scarce enough food for the two old folks, it took good figuring and dividing to give the young ones something.

*A popular arithmetic primer—TRANSLATOR.

But in the country no one ever starved yet, and so the Fottners managed to pull their children through. As soon as one of them was eight or nine years old, it could begin to earn a bit, and of course there was no danger after it could quit school.

The girls soon went into service; of the boys the oldest, Georgie, stayed at home, the second, Vitus by name, went to the Shuller Farm, and the third—well, I am going to tell you about him.

Matthew his name was, and he came into the world long after the sixth child, and quite unexpectedly.

At that time Fottner was already fifty, and his wife was in the forties.

So in the opinion of all acquaintances there was absolutely no necessity of getting a seventh child to add to their six.

In its early years this child was weakly and puny to boot; its parents often thought it looked sickly and would soon become a little angel in Heaven. But it was not so; Matthew thrived, became a priest subsequently, and weighed in his prime two hundred and fifty, and not a pound less.

His choice of a clerical profession was unforeseen, and caused by nothing less than the pricks of conscience of the Upper-Bridge Farmer in Eynhofen.

The same had much money, no children, and a grievous sin that weighed on his heart. Years before he had perjured himself in a lawsuit with his neighbor and had won thereby.

At first he did not care much, for in swearing he had taken the precaution of turning down the fingers of his left hand. Venerable tradition has it that in this way the oath passes downward through the body into the ground, like a bolt striking a lightning-rod, and so can do no harm.

But the Bridge Farmer was a timid person, and as he grew older he brooded frequently over the affair, and resolved to repair the damage. That is, not the damage

LUDWIG THOMA

which the neighbor had suffered, but the disadvantages that might accrue to his own immortal soul.

Because we know nothing for certain, and because the Almighty Judge perhaps thought differently about the lightning-rod oath, and did not observe the Eynhofen tradition.

So he considered what and how much he must give in order to balance the account and make his merit outweigh his badness.

That was not simple and easy, for no one could tell him: So and so many masses will square you; but it was possible that he might make a miscount of one and lose everything.

The Bridge Farmer had never been stupid in his earthly affairs, and had often given too little, but never too much.

But in this deal with Heaven he thought more would be better, and as he had often read in the paper that nothing afforded a better claim on the next world than assistance in supplying priests for the many empty posts, he resolved to have a boy study for holy orders entirely at his own expense.

His choice fell upon Matthew Fottner, and this he rued more than once.

He should have considered more carefully the quality of the Fottner boy's intellectual endowments.

And he would have saved himself much vexation and much anxiety if he had taken more time and picked out some one else.

He was in too much of a hurry, and because the teacher said nothing against it and old man Fottner at once agreed with joy, he was satisfied.

Doubtless he took the priest at Eynhofen as an example, thinking that what *he* knew couldn't be hard to learn.

Now Matthew was not exactly stupid; but he had no very good head for studying, and his pleasure in it was not immoderate either.

When they told him that he was to become a priest, he

was content, for the first thing he grasped was that he could then eat more and work less.

And so he went to the Latin School at Freising. The first three years were all right. Nothing brilliant, but good enough so he could show his reports at the parsonage when he came home for vacations.

And when the priest read that Matthew Fottner was of moderate talent and industry and was making sufficient progress, he would say each time in his fat voice: *magnos progressus fecisti, discipule!*

Matthew did not understand; nor did his father, who stood beside him. But the priest did not care for that.

He only said it for the sake of his reputation, so that certain doubters might see that he was a learned gentleman.

When folks talked about it in Eynhofen and told each other that Fottner's Matt could already talk Latin like a Roman, no one rejoiced more intensely than the Bridge Farmer.

That is comprehensible. For he had speculated in the scholarship of the lad, and watched him with rapt attention, as he would anything else that he had put money into.

So he was glad on general grounds, and especially so when Matt came home after the third year with glasses on his nose and an actually priestly look.

This tickled him to death, and he asked the teacher whether, in view of this circumstance, and inasmuch as Matt knew Latin, after all — more than was needed to read mass — whether it mightn't be possible to shorten the time.

When the teacher told him that such exceptions could not be made, he found it intelligible; but when the schoolmaster tried to explain the reason, saying that a priest didn't merely have to know the reading of the mass by heart, but must know even more, the Bridge Farmer shook his head and laughed a bit. He wasn't such a fool as to swallow that. Why did anybody have to learn more'n what he needed? Hey?

No, this is the way it was: them perfessers in Freising

wanted to keep Matt a good long while, because they made money on him.

In this belief he was very much strengthened when Matthew Fottner flunked the fourth year in the Latin school. 'Count o' Greek. Because he couldn't learn Greek.

That made it as clear as day, for now the Bridge Farmer asked anybody, what did a priest have to know Greek for, when services and mass were celebrated in Latin?

They must be slick fellows, those gentlemen in Freising, reg'lar pickpockets.

He was all-fired mad at them, for he couldn't put any blame on the Fottner boy.

Matt told him that all he'd ever thought and known was that he'd simply have to study what the priest in Eynhofen knew. But he'd never heard him say a word of Greek all his life long, and so he hadn't been prepared for anything like that.

To this no objection could be made; on Matt's part the deal was straight and O. K. The rascality was on the part of the others, off there in Freising. The Bridge Farmer went to the priest and made complaint.

But thieves stand by each other, and the farmer gets done every time. The priest laughed at first, and said that was simply the law and he had had to learn it too; but when the Bridge Farmer doubted that, and told the priest, if that was the case, to celebrate mass once in Greek, and he would pay whatever it cost, his Reverence grew abusive and called the Bridge Farmer an impudent clod-hopper. Because he didn't know what to say, ye see?

Now things had come to the point where the Bridge Farmer had to make up his mind whether to try Matt again, or send somebody else to Freising who would figure on the Greek from the start.

If he did the latter, it would take three years more, and the money for the Fottner boy would be completely lost. And besides, nobody could tell whether they wouldn't think up something else there in Freising, if they couldn't trip

up the new pupil on Greek. Therefore he resolved to have Matt try the thing once more, and admonished him that he'd just have to take a fresh hold and keep it.

This to be sure Fottner did not do, for he was no friend of toilsome head-work, but his teacher was himself a clergyman, who knew that the servants of God could officiate without learning, if need be. Therefore he preferred, purely from a sense of duty, not to injure Matt, and with Christian charity he let him be promoted the second year.

Matt came home as a member of the fifth form, and looked for all the world like a student.

He was already seventeen, and physically very much developed.

The Vicar of Aufhausen he overtopped by a head, and all his limbs were coarse and uncouth. And at this time also he lost his boyish voice and assumed a rasping bass.

When he foregathered with his school friends Joseph Scharl of Pettenbach and Martin Zollbert of Glonn, it was clear that he could drink vastly more than they, and that he already was well informed on all convivial regulations.

His class spirit was strong, and he would sing with his boon companions such college songs as *"Vom hoh'n Olymp herab ward uns die Freude"* or *"Drum Brüderchen er-her-go biba-ha-mus"** so powerfully and loudly that the Bridge Farmer at the next table would be astonished at the scholarly attainments of the former village lad.

And when Matt made his visit at the parsonage, he did not as in previous years request the cook to announce him, but handed her his calling card, on which was neatly printed:

MATTHEW FOTTNER
stud. lit. et art.

Which means *studiosus litterarum et artium,* a devotee of letters and fine arts.

Old Fottner was proud of his son, on whom a faint reflection of his future dignity already rested, who was

* Familiar drinking songs.— TRANSLATOR.

invited to dinner by the priest, took walks with the Vicar, and played tarot with the teacher and the chief of the constabulary.

And the Bridge Farmer was satisfied, too, even though he occasionally found the expenditures of his young protégé somewhat large. But he said nothing, fearing that the latter might still lie down in the traces if he put too little oats before him.

So Matt spent a merry vacation, and marched back to Freising in October with renewed strength.

Unfortunately he was destined to fall on evil days. The master of the fifth form was a disagreeable man: strict and very caustic and sarcastic to boot.

The first time he saw this sky-scraping farmer lad, who did look queer enough on the school benches, he laughed and asked him whether he towered equally high above his fellow pupils in intellect. That this was not the case could not remain a secret, and then the bantering never ceased. At first the teacher really tried to strike sparks out of this stone; but when he found he could not, he soon enough gave up all hope.

Matthew Fottner made no objection at all when they no longer consulted his opinion on the Gallic War or Caius Julius Cæsar, and conjugated the Greek verbs without his coöperation.

He laughed good-humoredly when every word in his exercises was underscored with red, and he marveled at the ambition of the little fellows before and beside him, disputing as to whether something was right or wrong.

But to be sure, given such a point of view, the end was easy to foresee, and in August the Bridge Farmer faced the same choice as two years before, whether or not to maintain his confidence in the Fottner youth.

That is, he really no longer had any choice, for now, after six years, he could not very well begin a new experiment with somebody else.

So he comforted himself with the reflection that a good horse pulls twice, and swallowed his bitter pill.

Doubtless he did make a wry face over it, and his joy of Matt had become diminished by a good bit; grave doubts began to stir in his heart as to whether a *bona fide* priest could be made out of this gawky Goliath.

But his bad humor was not contagious, at least not for Mr. Matthew Fottner.

The latter was a welcome guest during his vacation at all the taverns for ten miles around; and when he got out of money and was far from home, he remembered that a parsonage stands near every church, and would go in and ask for a *viaticum* (traveling money), which was due him as *studiosus litterarum,* a devotee of letters and fine arts.

And in so doing he would now and then encounter a young vicar, neophyte, or undergraduate, who would exchange reminiscences of Freising with him, and who, after the fifth pint of beer, would join in the fine songs: "*Vom hoh'n Olymp herab ward uns die Freude*" and "*Brüderchen, er-her-go bi-ba-hamus.*"

When he again entered the seat of culture in October, his head was considerably thicker, his bass appreciably deeper, but otherwise everything was as before.

In the meantime he had not learned to love Caius Julius Cæsar, nor to appreciate the Greek verbs; his teacher was as disagreeable as before, and the result at the close of the year was that Matt must once more forego promotion.

At the same time he was notified that he had passed the age limit and might not come back again. Now wouldn't that beat all?

So they were all out in the cold: old Fottner who had been so proud, the tavern-keeper who had already been joyfully looking forward to Matt's first mass, and the Catholic Church, which was losing such a pillar.

But most of all the Upper-Bridge Farmer of Eynhofen, whose whole deal with our Lord God was off. By all the

devils, if that wasn't enough to madden a man and make him curse!

For seven long years he had had to pay over the nail, do nothing but pay, and no small sum, either; you can believe that. A mile away you could tell the quality of the fodder Matt had been standing in. And everything was in vain; on the heavenly record of the Bridge Farmer that lightning-rod oath was still written down, but there wasn't an ink-spot on the credit side.

For after all, nobody could suppose that our Lord God would let Matt's scholarly training be set down as anything to the good.

Such a miserable, outrageous piece of rascality surely had never existed before in the history of the world!

This time the rage of the Bridge Farmer was directed not merely against the teachers at Freising; the priest had enlightened him as to the fact that Matt was deficient in everything except tarot playing and beer-drinking. The ragamuffin, the good-for-nothing!

Now he was running around Eynhofen with glasses on his nose and a belly like an alderman. He looked like a regular Vicar, sure enough, who was going to begin reading mass the next day. And all the time he was nothing, absolutely nothing.

The only person who remained calm under these blows of fate was the quondam *stud. lit.* Matthew Fottner.

If he had studied longer and more, I should be fain to think he had learned this calm of soul from the seven wise men.

As it is, I must assume that it was inborn.

He had, to be sure, gained no treasure of classical learning for his future life, but he figured that in any case seven fat years had been accorded him, which no one could ever take from him again. Not even the Bridge Farmer with all his rage.

Why should man torment himself with thoughts of the future? The past is worth something, too, and especially

such a jolly one as he had had in the secret tap-room of the Star Brewery, where he had sat with his boon-companions and had gradually mastered the art of draining a glass of beer at a draught. Where he had sung all the bully songs in the collection, such as *"Crambambuli"* and the *"Bier la la,"* and the ever memorable and eternally beautiful *"Drum Brüderchen er-her-go bi-ba-hamus."*

Such recollections are also a treasure for life; and even if the sun-dried country bumpkins didn't understand it, jolly it had been all the same.

And the future couldn't be so terribly bad either.

For the time being he resolved to go into the army; he would have to serve his three years anyhow, and so it would be better if he reported right now. In this way he would get out of the Bridge Farmer's sight and be left in peace. He tried for the First Regiment of His Majesty's Grenadiers, and was accepted.

And if the Bridge Farmer wanted to, he could now sit in the Hofgarten and look with pride at the file-leader of the second company.

That head, which stuck up so big and red out of the collar of his uniform, had been fattened at the farmer's expense; and if it might have looked good over the black cassock, with the tonsure on the back of it, yet any just man must have admitted that it didn't make such a bad appearance over the white braid and the bright blue uniform.

To be sure, the present calling of the Fottner lad was not pleasing to God; but he himself liked it.

The food was not bad, and the one-year volunteers willingly treated the big fellow to a glass of beer when he introduced himself as fellow-student, boasting that he had not been left behind when his former *confratres* had had a little convivial matin celebration.

And as he showed himself apt in the drill manual, he gained the favor of the captain, and after only eight months he was duly appointed a petty officer.

All this would have been correct and pleasing, and all mankind, including Eynhofen, might have been satisfied with the life destiny of Matthew Fottner.

But a worm was gnawing at the heart of the Bridge Farmer.

It ate and ate and gave him no peace by day or night.

When other people lose all their prospects, they sigh, tie a heavy stone to their hopes, and sink them in the sea of forgetfulness.

A tenacious farmer does not do so; he keeps turning them over in his mind to see whether he cannot save a part, if he is not to have the whole.

And when the Bridge Farmer's anger had lost its edge, he again began to brood and plan.

But because it was a matter that concerned book-learning, his own wisdom did not satisfy him; so he resolved to go straight to the right shop and ask a priest's advice.

The one at Eynhofen he did not trust; not since that time long ago, when the priest had told him such barefaced lies about Greek.

But in Sintshausen, twelve miles off, there was a priest, the Reverend Joseph Shoebower, that one could put confidence in.

Oh, but he was a shrewd one; a deputy in the diet, three times as Catholic as the other "shepherds," and a hot-headed fighting-cock, who regularly chewed up Liberals with his salad and who set the king's Ministers dancing to the very maddest of tunes, until he finally got the best-paid post in the whole bishopric. To him our farmer went, for he would surely know some means of preventing such a robust churl as Matthew Fottner from being lost to the Church.

So he asked him whether you couldn't grease some one's palm,—the school at Freising, or the bishop, or some one.

"It is always a meritorious work," said the Reverend Shoebower, "when one invests his money for Catholic purposes; but in this case it would not do much good, for the certificate for admission to the university can only be

got by an examination. At least as long as the civil power —I am sorry to say—still has the right to put in its oar in educational matters. But something else can be done, Bridge Farmer," he said, " if you are set on having Matt Fottner enter the ministry at all costs. There is a Collegium Germanicum in Rome, where German youths are trained by the Jesuits. They are very particular about faith, but as to education they close one eye in the interest of the faith."

" Hm," remarked the Bridge Farmer, " but I wonder if the masses that such a one reads, who's come all the way from Rome, have the same force."

"A bigger one, if anything, supposing that was possible at all," said the Reverend, " for you mustn't forget, Bridge Farmer, that the school in Rome is right near the Holy Father."

" Well, but I wonder if they require Greek there, too, and such like gammon."

" Only for the sake of appearances. Nobody will flunk on that account if he's all right in his faith, and pays his money correctly and in due season. But here in Germany Matthew Fottner can't be ordained."

" Well, I'd like to know why not?"

" Because those scoundrelly Prussians have made a law against it."

" Well now, aren't they a bad lot?"

" Right you are; and a lot worse than you think for. Probably Fottner would simply have to become a missionary. That ought to fill you with joy, for that's actually more deserving than to become priest here."

" Oh, but are you quite sure of that? I wouldn't want to have all those big expenses again and then have it turn out only a half-way business."

" It is certain and indisputable, for the messengers of the faith were always most highly honored."

The Bridge Farmer was happy, and went home from Sintshausen with his tail in the air.

Now everything must surely go right, and his plan would succeed.

They should make eyes in Freising when Matt Fottner got ordained in spite of them, or actually became a missionary who converts the Hindians, and whose masses count even more.

And the Eynhofen folks that were forever quizzing him in the tavern about his Latin officer, they should open their eyes, too, one of these days.

On the very next day he took the train to Munich. No joy is complete, and the palm of victory is never to be gained with easy toil.

This was the experience of the Bridge Farmer when he communicated his plan to the royal corporal Matthew Fottner.

The latter declared roundly that he neither wished to study nor to go out among the Hindians.

When the old man represented to him that he would only have to study a very little, he remarked that nothing at all was still better; and when the Bridge Farmer asseverated by all that was holy that he would become a saint, just like those plaster men in the church at Eynhofen, he replied that he didn't care a straw.

Everything was fruitless. The Bridge Farmer had to withdraw with his business undone, and with the old, gnawing worm in his heart. Nevertheless, he did not give up hope, but got after old Fottner and promised him the nicest things for his Matt.

For a long time it was in vain, but after about two years Heaven itself interposed and brought about a favorable turn of affairs.

The captain of the second company of His Majesty's Grenadiers was made a major. Into his position came a venomous gentleman who fairly pestered both troops and petty officers, and thus became an instrument of Holy Church.

For when Matthew Fottner was punished with solitary

confinement for the second time, he resolved to serve no longer in the army and to give up altogether his purpose of reënlisting. Just at this time he received a letter from his father, which read as follows:

"Deer Matty:

After waitin fur a long time I'll finely rite you the brijfarmer wuz heer agen Yestiddy an sez you cud becum a sanet an woodn haf to lern enythin ixcep that yood go to roam. deer matty think it over ef youd bee prest mung the hindeens but the furst mas sellabrayshun wood bee in the tavrn an by the way the brijfarmer sez hel pay you threthowzen marx too boot when yor dun. deer matty think it over wel and how mutch it wood pleez yor father. I didn rite this letter. Sensi rote it. I mus stop my ritin cuz the lite didn burn eny mor. With meni regards I reemane yor luving father. Good nite. Slepe wel and swete dreems. O revor mayx ushapy. Rite mee at wuns fur I cant wate fur yor ansur.

The letter had its effect. Corporal Fottner reflected that it woudn't be a bad life among the clerical gentlemen in Rome, better at any rate than in barracks under a captain who was so generous with the guard-house.

So he agreed, and when his time was up at the close of the summer maneuvres, he went to Eynhofen and got in writing the Bridge Farmer's promise relative to the three thousand marks.

When this matter had been arranged, and he had received a handsome sum for traveling expenses into the bargain, he set off for Rome.

For seven years he was not seen again; for seven years he dwelt as Fottnerus Eynhofenensis in the German College among the gentle Jesuits, who filed and polished at this four-square block for dear life. A high polish he did not get, but the worthy fathers thought it would suffice for the savages, and told him that the power of his faith would very well make amends for the lack of science.

Matthew Fottner had his own thoughts and said nothing.

For seven years old Fottner sat in his house, number eight in Eynhofen village, rejoicing over the future sanctity of his son; for seven years the inn-keeper kept

figuring out in advance how many gallons of beer would be drunk at a first-class first-mass celebration; and for seven long years the Bridge Farmer went every month to the express office in Pettenbach and sent a postal money order to Roma, Collegio Germanico.

People grew old and gray; now there was a wedding and now a funeral; old Haberlschneider's house burned down, and Kloyber went bankrupt.

Little events in Eynhofen grew in numbers just like the big ones out in the world.

Until one day the priest—the new priest, for the old one had died three years before—announced from the chancel that on the 25th of July, the day of St. James the Apostle, the Reverend Licentiate Matthew Fottner would celebrate Holy Mass for the first time in Eynhofen. Then there was excitement and astonishment in the whole country round! In all the taverns men talked about it, and the old Bridge Farmer, who rarely went out any more since he had had his stroke, now sat in the barroom every day and gave back the taunts that he had had to take in times gone by.

A week before the celebration Matthew Fottner arrived. He was met at the station with a decorated carriage, and thirty lads on horseback escorted him.

A mile and a half from Eynhofen stood the first triumphal arch, which was adorned with fresh fir-branches and with blue and white flags.

At the entrance to the village another arch stood, and a third was set up near the tavern. From the steeple floated the yellow and white banner, salutes were crashing on the hill behind the Stackel Farm, and the Aufhausen band pealed out its ringing airs.

Now the carriage halted before the parental estate of the licentiate; Matthew Fottner descended and gave his father, his mother, and their other children his first blessing.

I must say he did have a clerical appearance and manner.

His eyes had a mild glance, his chin was already double, and the movements of his fat hands had something well rounded, something actually dainty about them.

His speech was literary, emphasizing every syllable; he would now say that he had had a suf-fi-ci-en-cy, and that people had ma-ni-fest-ed much love to-ward him.

Of the file-leader in the second company of His Majesty's Grenadiers there was nothing left but the height and the uncouth feet and paws.

His sentiments were mild and kind. He forgave all who had in former days led him as-tray into temp-ta-tion, he forgave his parents and relatives and neighbors for having doubted him, he forgave the Bridge Farmer for having ut-ter-ed angry words to him, and he forgave everybody everything.

And he looked down with compassion and mercy on those sons of men who did not stand so close to the throne of God as he.

During the week preceding the first mass he paced from house to house and blessed all the people; the Bridge Farmer among them, who from that hour was unshaken in the belief that he was now square with our Lord God in the matter of that lightning-rod oath.

The first mass was celebrated with rare splendor; folks came from far and wide, for the blessing of a newly consecrated priest has especial power, and an old proverb says it is worth wearing out a pair of shoe-soles to get it.

The festival sermon was preached by the Very Reverend Joseph Shoebower, who had for years been Councillor for Spiritual Affairs and Papal Prelate.

He informed the awe-struck congregation into what a high, exalted, holy, incomparably holy, incomparably blessed calling the young priest was entering, and praised him in the most extravagant terms.

For you must know that Jesus Christ never was so praised on earth as a four-square young licentiate is praised nowadays.

After the spiritual feast came the secular one in the tavern, and no one can hope to imagine the magnificence of it.

Two oxen, three cows, a steer, eighteen calves, and twenty swine had been slaughtered by the host; and in addition countless geese, chickens, and ducks had to lose their lives. Two thousand gallons of beer were drunk, almost nine hundred more than the host had figured.

When the dishes were passed around to take up offerings during the festival dinner, the gifts flowed in so copiously that two thousand marks were left over for the licentiate.

It was an elevating occasion.

The people of Eynhofen thought the newly consecrated priest would board the very next ship and go off to the wild Hindians. Old Mrs. Fottner shed tears in advance, and all over the village they were telling tales of the dangers the missionaries had to undergo among the cannibals, who are wont to take such a martyr, stick a spit right through him, and then twist him slowly over the fire until he turns nice and brown.

But they little knew the honored son of Eynhofen, Matthew Fottner by name, if they thought he would have anything to do with that sort of enterprise.

He now had a fortune of five thousand marks; three thousand from the Bridge Farmer and two thousand from the special offering. With this capital he migrated to Switzerland and became a pastor in the Canton of Graubünden. In those parts the people speak German as well as in Eynhofen, and they roast chickens and ducks on the spit, but no missionaries.

There Fottner spent his days in peace and contentment, and soon weighed two hundred and fifty, not a pound less.

For the Bridge Farmer, who would have liked to see Matt as a saint, this was a disappointment.

And for the Hindians too.

For they will never again enjoy the prospect of having a corporal of the Bavarian Royal Grenadiers come out to them as a missionary.

RUDOLF HANS BARTSCH

THE STYRIAN WINE-CARTER

TRANSLATED BY BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN, PH.D.

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YE, any one not familiar with the Styrian-Carinthian highway through the valley of the Drau does not know what one of the good old Austrian imperial highroads in the good old days might undertake. Hop-up-and-down is its behavior, with snake-like humps, like a jumping polecat. Serpentine windings? Don't exist there. Straight as an arrow it heedlessly goes over mountain after mountain, down to the Drau and up again to airy heights, and any motorist who is slightly in a hurry will make a miniature descent into hell of some 250 feet, say beyond Völkermarkt, approaching Lavamünd; the terrified shriek of the ladies is already resounding at the bottom, but their stomachs would still be on top of Völkermarkt Hill, obeying the law of inertia, if they could have passed up through their mouths. And then immediately after, whee! up a fresh "mountain."

This is the way we treat the good old times nowadays. Was not that road, in its day, built to lengthen life? There you could ponder over your existence, for your little horses, like peripatetic philosophers, pushed onward with bobbing heads, laboriously and slowly, slowly.

Ah, but it is a beautiful road, beautiful! Beautiful enough to tarry on, to die on. The more remote from you, the higher rises, terrace-fashion, the titanic grandeur of the Alps. Clear to the south, the gigantic flight of the Sann

Valley Dolomites sweeps on beyond the Obir, and then the ghostly pale Karawanken stare across at you. In the middle foreground the mighty plateaus of the Ferlacher and Eisenkappler Country gradually become quieter, and then comes the shining plain, crisscrossed into sections by groves and gold-gleaming fields, by pale-green marsh-meadows and red-blooming buckwheat. And with an abrupt descent from the road you come to the Drau far below, flowing with deep roar between steep banks thickly set with towering young spears of spruce, and tussling with rocky boulders; yet from the road one could not look down upon its battles there in the cool canyon, so precipitous are its banks, so densely black rises the legion of spruces. Only when a brook storms under the road and down to the Drau can one see its grayish flow and spume through the gap below — the stream that once halted the German language on its yearning flight toward the blue waves of that southern sea.

But we on the road, high up in the sunlight, send a whoop shooting like an arrow across river and plain into the divine vastness of the distance, toward the glimmering, rocky mountains, and salute as exultant children the Father of all that is mightiest in us.

Rarely, rarely nowadays does such a "ya-oo" flit from the wind-swept height across the valley. For the road has grown desolate and no longer carries weight. For hours at a time one may vainly hearken to the rustle of the woods, the deep rumble of the River Drau, without ever detecting the cheerful home-bound rattle of a rustic cart between pine-woods and the angle of a mountain. This proud, lofty road no longer serves a purpose on earth, that once was the soul of the Carinthian land.

Of all histories and human destinies those are the most conducive to meditation which are closely knitted together with a bit of universal fate, and so let me narrate here for the woeful diversion of men the story of Florian Hausbaum, who was once the youth and the song of this road.

Florian Hausbaum was a Styrian of the woods from Mahrenberg, that same superb, defiantly German Mahrenberg below which the Drau plunges over titanic boulders, and over which two churches stand face to face, tower against tower, like locomotives desirous of ramming each other; the old Slovene Church, and the new German-Evangelical Church.

But Florie Hausbaum's youth saw nothing of the future German death-struggle there in the wooded valley of the Drau. Every one was still singing the dear old songs, and Florian sang them best of all. He learned nothing, he never drudged, he merely sang, as forgetful of toil as the cricket of the south. And when it was time to go to work, the good-for-nothing did not care to earn his bread in the cool spruce-grown ravine with its saw-mills; his cheery, worthless soul felt drawn to the open, sunny country which reaches up a good stretch along the Drau westward of Marburg, until Bachern and Possruck bite together their bristly jaws at the river, making the region wild, precipitous, and rugged.

In sunny Marburg the wine flows down all the hills in streams to this very day. But at that time, more than forty years ago, there were three times as many vineyards, extending clear beyond Maria-Rast and Zellnitz, and Florian Hausbaum became a wine-carter and made trips into Carinthia.

And so he drove his nodding horses uphill and downhill through his native village across the border; and in Drauburg, in Lavamünd, in Völkermarkt, and Klagenfurt, all the inn-keepers waited for him as the bringer of joy. And he was the lad for that. He sang all the way along the wind-blown road, and from all the windows men and maidens nodded to him.

Between Völkermarkt and Lavamünd the liverymen had grown rich on the relaying which the excellent humps of the road brought them, and there they also had open purses and open hearts for wine. Hence at the two ends of his

RUDOLF HANS BARTSCH

route, where the road did its maddest tricks, Florie was best loved and known: if for no other reason, because he had so much time on account of all the "getting his breath," staying over night, feeding, and changing horses.

He too liked best to dwell in that up-and-down world. For he had a girl in Drauburg, and one in Lavamünd; one at St. Martin and another at Eis close by (dangerous and burdensome sweethearting), one at Lippitzbach, one in Völkermarkt, and a warm terminal station at Klagenfurt. These seven dear yearning creatures were just enough for him, but he was also just enough for them; for he never skipped one of them when he went his rounds.

He was a handsome fellow, of that becoming, jolly, light-blond type of Old Styria which is now beginning to grow rare among the men in the valley of the Drau. His eyes laughed; nothing else in the world laughed so, except his road, when the snow had melted away and the first trip began. Then the little puddles in the road, formed by the melting snow and rippled by the wind, looked at the sky out of a thousand bright blue eyes, and there was a wink and a smirk in them all the way from Drauburg to Klagenfurt.

He loved this road with all the power of his heart, which otherwise, i. e., for the girls, was far too gay. Besides, the girls changed, but the road remained. There was but the one, and it was unique.

His life obeyed the laws which God has given for Nature and wine. In the winter he lay quietly at Marburg, or made little wooden carts. But when February was past and the wine was seasoned, so that the new vintage was at last ready for transport, and when the snow trickled off the roads, then began his regal course, his bridal entry into Carinthia, his jubilant, earliest march of triumph.

He always wore a flower in his hat, and his nags each got one, too. But when in the early days of March he drove along the road, only just freed of snow, he would take a whole supply of violets with him, for in his blessed, sunny land these sometimes bloomed by the end of Feb-

ruary in special sunny nooks. God of love, what eyes the forest-villagers along the Drau made at them, and still more the Carinthians, who often do not receive their violets from heaven before May! They scarcely would have primulas, while even Florie's horses were wearing violets on their collars, because he had kept them fresh between his casks.

To all the girls he brought the breath of the Styrian spring with him, and thus Florie Hausbaum fairly came to personify the spring-time over the whole length of the Carinthian Road, and as such he was cheered and loved like a young emperor.

He was happy.

The yellow-hammers perched near the road and sang, the larks rose high, the sun danced in bretzel-shaped figures in the mirroring puddles, the sparrows fought in exuberant glee over what Florie's horses had dropped for them, the relaying liverymen grinned, the inn-keepers stood planted before their doors waiting for him, and shouted Hooray, and beside him shook and gurgled the fragrant, mighty wine-casks.

But far before him longing girl-faces were waiting behind the windows near the long road. Love, love awaited him from one end of the road to the other. Whether it was the jubilee of his boon-companions, the relieved "At last!" of the inn-keepers, or the smothered sigh of the pretty girls — it was all a part of the same joy.

And these girls were so modest. First because they were Carinthians (where you don't always have to marry right away), and then because Florie had always been away all winter, so that nothing but woeful legend and delightful little stories about him were current. So recollection was at work in the yearning girlish hearts, and it made him twice as cheerful, as golden, as laughing, as slender and handsome, as he was.

But in March he would come along singing and with a violet in his hat, and as full of intoxicating power as his

casks, and would make them all happy, inn-keepers and girls; there was a quatrain about him which all the lads along the Carinthian Road used to sing when they wanted to tease the love-sick girls. It went this way:

> "A vi'let from the roadside, a kiss for the night:
> The Styrian wine-carter is my delight."

He knew what he meant to them all; he knew the feeling of happiness that radiated from him, and often when he creaked along the road in his wagon until far into the quiet, hissing night of the *Föhn*, and the gleam of a lighted window replied to the swaying light of his lantern on the horse-collar, he himself would send that same little ditty out into the yearning, burning spring night with his strong, clear voice, making the sleepless girls that heard it bite their pillows with delight.

Such a night it was that brought him a small misfortune and a great triumph. On that confounded Völkermarkt Hump his cart had got onto the slope, while he was still filled with the echoes of the sweetness for the sake of which he had outstayed his time in Lippitzbach. There he had been received as the outstretched arms of the trees welcome the roaring *Föhn*, or the waiting spring earth a warm rain. Now as he drove on, happiness was still bounding within him, a sea of dreams, but late, late was the hour. So he drove through the entire night, and at the gray dawn he had reached the height opposite the Völkermarkt Hollow. This time he was carting a delicious wine, which seldom grew in Styria. Farmer Pfriemer in Marburg had become a sworn rival of the Hungarians, and had begun to export a dark red wine, called Vinaria, so that the Carinthians might henceforth get a red wine from Styria, too. The first vintage had turned out sweet and heavy, and now Florian Hausbaum was carting the seasoned beverage up to Völkermarkt in two casks, one of them tremendous, the other of very respectable size.

But while he was dreaming thus, his horses had already turned down the hill. The cart exerted enormous pressure and took the horses off their feet; at this moment the Styrian wine-carter started into wakefulness, and while the wagon was thundering downhill with more and more terrifying speed, he loosened the drag and threw it under the hind wheel, and at this abrupt braking the wagon leaped mightily into the air, like a startled rhinoceros. One of the poles on the side cracked, and the smaller cask toppled over and fell from the cart with a heavy bum-bum-bum-bum. Florie had tried to throw his weight against it, but the cask gave his head a severe slanting blow before dropping full weight into the road.

A stave had sprung, and the pressure made the deep-red fluid gurgle out in a flood. The white dust of the road became ruddy. The young carter had just enough presence of mind to roll the heavy wine-cask into the grass, and then increasing faintness reeled about him. But with his last thought he clung to his wine. As he sank down he pressed his body against the crack from which the wine was streaming out, the cask leaned heavily against him and crushed him against the ground — and then he knew nothing more.

Many voices wakened him. A girl was crying, an old woman was storming, the inn-keeper called him by name, the heavy scent of new wine hung about him. A crowd of people stood around, and the cart was gone, and the cask resting on him the men pulled away, so that the wine at once leaped forth again. So they turned the damaged spot up. But he still lay there as formerly in his delight he had gone along the road, with his jacket torn open to let the air of spring cool his heart. Only his festive white shirt had become spotted with red from the spilled wine.

The keeper of the Ox Inn at Völkermarkt, however, nearly fell upon him and kissed him. He had already been waiting on the hill-top when he saw the masterless cart, with the one cask, arrive at the bottom of Steil Valley and stand there; for of themselves the horses would not climb

the hill. Then he had run for aid, and with him everybody that had been waiting for wine and Florie, and two score people had seen how the faithful Florian, in spite of unconsciousness and pain, had with his own body guarded the wine and prevented its escape.

That was a Styrian wine-carter!

Hausbaum was told the whole story while everything was still reeling about him and head and ribs ached. He had already begun to weep like a child; but when he learned of his heroic deed, his lips drew down only four or five times more; then his mouth changed from a horseshoe into a broad line, and at the end Florie laughed all over his face and so overpoweringly that all joined in.

Now he was carried in triumph to Völkermarkt, found his horses sound and contented, and was extolled for the hero he was. For he had preserved a sacred treasure for Völkermarkt.

This tale ran over half the Carinthian land, and that was the climax and the highest prosperity of Florian Hausbaum's bright life.

Then, however, his fortunes, his renown, and his importance declined all at once. Love and acclamation died away, and his calling with all its joys was crushed with him. And that was because, far below in the plain across the Drau, the railroad was built.

For another year Florie Hausbaum proudly and loftily carted his wine into the Carinthian land. Far below him, beyond the stream, they were working on the long iron serpent; but he did not even look at it.

In the second year he only carted his wine until the early days of summer. But even on his spring trip his heart grew anxious and heavy. The girls were no longer starved with love-pangs as formerly, not at all, for the handsome young engineers, and then the foremen and bosses, were turning things upside down. There had been dances, dances at Carnival time, even in the smallest villages.

And then came the day on which the first locomotive, decked out with flags, branches, ribbons, and flowers, pulled a whole trainful of jubilation from Marburg to Klagenfurt. Thirty young girls from the Styrian wine-centre were on the train in their festal finery, going to dance with the lads of Klagenfurt. All sang and shouted for joy because the new time had come, the time of youth.

But high up on the lonely road the fair-haired carter, who had meanwhile reached the shady side of thirty, held his hat with its fading bouquet before his face. The horses pulled till they trembled, but below them the iron serpent crawled along, overtook them without effort, and was lost to sight far ahead. Only a long, mocking whistle came to them from the distance, from the wooded moors beyond the Drau, wafted to them by wide-ranging breezes. From that day on it was the railroad that carried wine and love, wood and happiness, wares and hope.

But on the heights above Florian Hausbaum was making his last trip. His employer had given him notice. He let his quivering horses rest, and where in other days an outburst of happiness had made him send a halloo from the fairest spot far out across the conquered depths toward the Alps, there he now wept for a whole silly stretch.

Henceforth the road was desolate, at one blow — and no one even drove a cart over it any more. The manure which the farmers had conveyed to their fields was almost the only one of this world's goods which it still carried.

As for Florian Hausbaum, he became a driver for the Ox Inn at Völkermarkt; that was a little consolation, at least; to settle down here on the scene of former triumphs, and ever and again to be able to drive at least a little load of grain or wood over the beloved road. To be sure, he could no longer reach all his girls with these present trips. Nor did they need it, for now there was other supply. From over yonder, from across the Drau, from Prävali, Bleiburg, and Kühnsdorf, and also from Rückersdorf and

Grafenstein, and not to mention the provincial capital, from there came the new foes, who wore such handsome red caps when on duty, as resplendent as officers with their black velvet lapels and the gold rosettes and winged wheels. They were the young railroad officials, pupils and assistants, and each one was the Casanova of his district! In those small places there were no other uniforms, and what was the bouquet on Florian's hat worth, compared with those caps with gold braid and rosette! They took away his Lisi, Marianne at St. Martin, and the passionate beauty Resele in the little hamlet of Eis. At Klagenfurt and Völkermarkt they danced all the girls away before his very nose, and it was just the winter, toward which he had looked forward with joyful anticipation, which became the way of the cross for him, where each stopping-place meant the end of a love and loyalty. Florie's best quality, his rarity, was of course gone; from now on he was always on hand, after all, and more than that, he was no longer the bringer of joy, the messenger of the thawing breeze, as of yore.

He defended his position with the girls; but as full-bred Styrian he began quarrels and brawls with his rivals on the railroad, instead of becoming a railroad man himself. So he was locked up in Klagenfurt for a couple of weeks, and for the first time this man, hitherto so open-hearted, so totally without reserve, developed a secret emotional life: hate of the railroad, and love for his deserted highway.

In reality it was love for his fleeting youth, the unquenchable thirst of yearning desire for the past, memory! But because the road had been the scene of his eternally faded greatness, therefore he attached all this love to it.

The years dropped out of sight in gnawing conflicts with his steadily thickening blood, and youth was where the violets of Marburg were, and the songs, and the new wine: with new generations.

For three or four years, indeed, Florie still lived on the echoes of his victorious days, and was still widely and

warmly welcomed. But more and more strange faces came into the village, and new generations grew up that had not understood him in his glory of old. Girls of eighteen and twenty began to develop out of the children of that day, and these looked upon carter Hausbaum as a relic "of the time before the railroad came," as a venerable ancestor.

Rarer and rarer grew those admirers who would pound on the tavern table, saying, "Ah, old Florie, that was a devil of a lad for you!" So he himself began to play the narrator, and fiercely defended his own legend. But the more he had to tell, the older he appeared to the petticoated sex.

At first he was willingly listened to; then he was regarded as played out. Now he no longer talked with the old sorrowful ease, but with passionate bawling and irritation. He boastfully forced his stories upon people, and lost respect all the more.

Only the road, the old road remained his last sweetheart and remained quiet and faithful; both had become despised and useless, but they had clung to each other. Only, when he now drove over it — alas, how that too had changed. Formerly he brought along the new wine with the new spring.

Now he creaked along with the fire-wood for the winter.

His employer had begun a large business in wood; that made Hausbaum's carting period come in the fall. And so his little wagon again groaned over the deserted road, uphill, downhill, without his meeting a human soul. No driver but he was to be seen; he was like the ghost of the old road. The autumn tempest lodged in the canyon of the Drau, rebounded from all sides and whirled up, bidding him pull his old felt hat, on which he had long since given up putting any flowers, far down on his forehead. The land shook in the roaring sweep of a wrath of Doomsday, and his aging bones shivered. It was ending, ending; and where the larks of spring had once whirred about him, there he was now surrounded by the tittering dances of the withered leaves.

There he often saw once more the old houses with the little windows behind which he had had his girls, more of them and prettier ones than any lad in the land. But they had all married out of the houses or moved away, or had stayed on the spot and become care-worn housekeepers and mothers, who did not care to recognize him. The windows stared blindly at him, and no longer knew him for whom they had once opened like little gates of paradise, in passionate nights of spring. They had grown dull and gloomy; God knew who was now squatting behind them. But when from under one of the windows, despite the late October days, there came the breath of asters and everlasting, and some fresh young girl-face gazed in surprise toward the bony bachelor, who looked over inquiringly as with accursed, forlorn eyes, then his old heart would double up like a fist within him and cause him great pain.

It was all over; like fireworks.

And then, then even his very last sweetheart, which he had regarded as inalienable, was snatched from him: the highroad.

The first enemy he had merely followed with horrified eyes: the stinking, dust-whirling rattle-box, which flung the old road behind it as a spendthrift flings the precious money. But they kept coming oftener, the loud-colored power vehicles; faster and faster they became, and harder and harder it was for the carter's old hands to control the madly rearing horses.

In former days he had always walked beside his horses. Now that he had grown old and gray, he was very often glad to perch on the seat and doze there. But just when a short dream had helped him to forget the bitter change in his life, another of those monsters would roar behind him its spiteful, deep " too-oot, too-oot." Then it behooved him to jump down in a hurry, pull the nags to one side, and speak to the excited creatures words of calm, of love and kindness, while his old heart rose into his throat with fright and hate. But the unknown, insolent machine was already

far ahead, and away off on that terrible hill where the carter's horses quivered and stamped, where he had to breathe them nine times and smoked a whole pipe of tobacco before he reached the top, he would see the monster whizzing upward. As with a shout of joy it stormed the ascent, so that it seemed to fly out into the air at the top, before it was engulfed by the next hollow. And mockingly, already at an incredible distance, the "too-oot, too-oot" would come back to him, its bawling tones seeming to ooze away.

The low curs! Their love for this road was like that of the sportsman for the shy pigeons: love to shoot them. They joyously sought out this hundred-hilled stretch, and they exulted when they rolled over these great humps on the second or even the third speed. It was a delight to make a mock of the old road. Landscape? Beauty? It was ahead, never anywhere but ahead, ahead.

Florian Hausbaum had thought he must die of wrath and woe when these road-gobblers appeared, and yet the opposite happened: he had a new lease of life. At last he had something that once more linked him to this earth; and if it was a hatred, it led him back to men! Now they all understood him, now he could once more get first hearing in all the taverns; he could tell of dangers he had escaped, so that half a village would hastily collect to hear him repeat the tale; he might curse and threat without being ridiculed, think up tricks to play, and wage malicious battles, and once again the bar-rooms resounded with the old cry, long silenced, "Hooray, Florie, good for you! A reg'lar devil, that Hausbaum. Eyah, that's the old Styrian wine-carter for you!"

He found assent, approval, confirmation, wherever he went, and his superb white hair silenced all contradiction. Venerable and mighty was the hatred of Florian Hausbaum in all the land, and the eyes of the old carter again began to sparkle, his cheeks to look red, and his heart swelled, making the old man look magnificent. He had something to live for!

On a Sunday in spring he was standing at one end of Völkermarkt, in the midst of the men-folk who had come from church and were now puffing at their holiday pipes in God's delicious, mild air. There came a red motor through the place, quite slowly. A gentle and just citizen was riding in it, who himself hated the brutality of the speed-maniacs, and had accustomed himself to drive through towns with the mildness of a milk-wagon.

Old Hausbaum was still raging at the last "filthy brute," who had shot through the scattering holiday crowd like a barbarian on his scythed chariot in the battles of old. His pent-up rage was now vented upon these travelers, who came so opportunely into his clutches. He jumped into the path of the machine, the gentleman slowed down still more and tooted his horn. But Florian Hausbaum did not yield his ground. So the vehicle stopped.

And now it burst forth, the great speech of the old wine-carter; the mightiest one in the life of the Styrian, Florian Hausbaum:

"You wind-belchers! You road-stinkers, who sent for you? D' you bring any money into the land? Naw! D' you ever get out even once in Grafenstein, in Völkermarkt, in Lippitzbach? Or at Eis, at Lavamünd, at Drauburg or Hohenmauten or Mahrenberg? Naw! You've come from the city, you tiresome city-dudes and you women with your faces tied up as if you had the tooth-ache, and you never stop till you're in Marburg again, or maybe in Graz, 'cause the country inn-keeper's little bit o' grub ain't good enough for you. But to run down the poor farmer's last goose, run over children, drive horses crazy, torment their drivers, cover the Lord God's grain with dust, and dirty up the hay so 't not a beast 'll take a mouthful of it, go bellowing past the church just when the pastor's talking inside about the Kingdom o' Heaven, and not only that, but stink like the devil, that's what you like! You're sent by the devil, you look like the devil, you haven't got any more justice or mercy than he has, and now go and drive

to the devil and break your necks, that's my wish for you. There, now you can go on stinking!"

The ladies in the automobile scolded, the farmers round about pressed forward threateningly; but the gentleman driving, a quiet, composed person, merely looked sadly at the gendarme who came hurrying up, and said, "Did you hear all that? Make way for us at least, so that we shall not be torn to pieces."

He had to crank again. Then he drove away, down into the deep valley and up the hill beyond and away; but Florian Hausbaum stood like Siegfried after the battle with the dragon.

The gendarme said to him with some reproach, "Right you were, Florie. But if the gentleman goes to law, I'll have to testify against you. Then it'll go hard with you; do be sensible in your old age!" And he went.

But all the rest were of the opinion that it was quite impossible to be sensible about this, and Florian was loudly applauded. "That was fine, what you told 'em! Eyah, old Florie. That's right, Styrian folks know how to use their tongues."

The old carter was quite intoxicated with success and praise. He knew that his renown would go circling out over the whole country-side, and every farmer who had been at church this day would carry home the mighty speech of Florian Hausbaum more accurately than the sermon. He was great as in the olden days, and his heart swelled with pride.

Then came the shriek of a siren from the other end of the village. "Another stinking devil," they said. "Get out of the road, Florie."

But the old carter remained standing there with widespread feet, and his white hair blew about wildly in the spring breeze. He knew that signal; it came from a great machine that tore through the country every day, as if the point were to rescue and prevent a misfortune, instead of conjuring up one. And this machine was hated throughout the whole Carinthian land.

"Here I stand," shouted the old man in a frenzy, "and here I'll stay and not let a single auto out o' the village!"

He had just had a pleasant experience, and thought every machine would stop for him like the last one. But the monster was already at hand, and as for stopping, it could not even if the driver had wished to. An angry shout in the machine, a horrified wail rising from a hundred voices, and with a mighty leap the automobile crashed over the toppled obstacle, jumped, dragged, and tore itself along for ten full paces more, despite brakes and cut-out, and not until then did it come to a stop. The occupants, wealthy young people, leaped out. There lay Florie Hausbaum by the roadside.

The automobile had fatally injured him and hurled him to one side. Now every one ran for aid, and the giddy young people cursed the fact that their machine was so well known; they feared that assistance here would be dangerous. But not a soul said a cross word to them. So they knelt beside the injured white-bearded victim, wiped the blood from his face, and opened his vest.

As the physician was working over him, Florian Hausbaum awoke once more in this life.

He looked about him, and drew breaths of pain and affliction. But the wonderful spring air of that day penetrated even his crushed lungs like a mild wine in a parched throat. Intoxicating was this air, as of yore; weak and peaceful, victorious and beloved he was, as of yore: when he had saved the precious red wine.

Then, in his wandering mind, all his evil days vanished, and all hatred. Age was forgotten, and at this moment, when his soul began to flutter its wings like a new butterfly, all the foregoing was blotted out; there was no longer any suffering, nor dying. Timeless! There was nothing but spring air, lovely, hopeful spring air. And truly, the evil days of old age, of mockery, and of the railroad, of autumn tempests on the road, of a pulse that slackened in the veins —nothing of this could stand its ground. It was all a mere dream.

For he felt as weak and as happy as on the day when he had almost sacrificed his glorious youth for a cask of wine. And look, here were the moist, dark-red spots in the sunlit dust of the road, and the ruby red on his Sunday shirt flamed even more intensely.

So an unexampled happiness reeled through the Styrian wine-carter's mind, because his life's greatest day and his deed of heroism were still upon him. He sobbed in pain and joy, " Leave me and catch the precious wine. It must not run out. People, the sacred wine! "

And with the happiness of intoxication he sank into the roseate dream of eternity.

EMIL STRAUSS

MARA (1909)

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM GUILD HOWARD

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IT was in a Brazilian city. One morning I awoke early and felt my heart so full of repugnance to all life that I shut my eyes again and wondered what sort of dream could have left me in this feverish state of mind. But I could not recollect that I had had any dream; in the middle of the night, aroused by a creaking casement, I had started up out of a dreamless slumber. Whence came, then, for the second and the third time this darkness in me, this torturing feeling of oppression at every breath, this piteous longing never to have waked up and never again to have to wake up? I had gone contentedly to bed, and had slept a deep and peaceful sleep.

Confidingly and unguardedly you yield to fatigue and give yourself over to rest — what demon is it that then enters through the open portal, inoculates your heart with a black drop, stirs up and discolors and poisons with it all your blood until, foul and heavy as lead, it forces its way through your heart?

Or is it I — I who am that demon? As the dark bottom of a deep well is lighted up and revealed by the perpendicular rays of the sun only when the water above is quiet and clear as crystal — is it thus that the true color of my being stands forth from deep sleep when the will-o'-the-wisps of waking and dreaming are banished, and that color irradi-

ates and fills its domain, and is just grazed by the abrupt ray of suddenly awaking consciousness?

There it is once for all, and there is no escaping it! What is this darkness? Is it a phantom and a weakness? Is it only an enemy who challenges you and vanishes away in proportion as your own self enlarges? Is it death slowly developing in you?

It is intolerable. If this pillow were saturated with mortal poison, you would take the corner between your lips as the infant takes his mother's breast, and would drink release from your troubles. But if the poison stood over there in the other corner of the room, the mere ten paces to reach it would carry you too far back into life again! And yet tomorrow, or a few days hence, there will be moments when this darkness will suddenly surge up in you and consume you as though it were fire, so that you shrivel up within yourself and cannot excuse in your own eyes the shame of living. Yes, even though you can calmly look back upon this thing, smile at it like a reasonable man and joke about it, even then there is a secret fibre in your being which yearns for that darkness, which shudders in pride and awe of it, which has a premonition that in it there is something purer than all light and all joy.

In search of protection from such worrying phantasms I finally opened my eyes and turned toward the open window. But what I saw outside was so surprising that I closed my eyes again and cried, "What the devil is that?"

Having recovered my composure and the consciousness that I had senses, I opened my eyes once more and peered out: but on the ridge-pole of the adjacent farm building, like doves on a German stable, there still sat at regular intervals five vultures, immovable and waiting. As though cut out of black paper, they seemed pasted on the gleaming blue morning sky.

"Shameless fellows!" I ejaculated. "I must admit that I have been philosophizing here to myself like a dead dog; but I am not yet ready for you by a good deal!" They remained quietly sitting there.

FRANZ WILHELM VOIGT

BACK FROM THE FAIR

Then I jumped out of bed, took an orange from the fruit plate on the table, and threw it at the creatures. The orange flew neatly between two of them; the vulture perched nearest to its path straightened up, inquisitively turned his head with the greedy eyes to right and left, and then drew his head back again. And in their imperturbable, diabolical serenity the old fellows remained sitting on their perch, as uncanny as the stone gargoyles on the towers of Notre Dame in Paris.

I was not disposed to let these amiable beasts feast their eyes on me any longer; so I quickly took my bath, and dressed.

Although this day was still vacation, I made my rounds through the empty bedrooms and said to the only boy who — because his tuition had not been paid — had been required to spend the holidays at the boarding school, that he might as well roll over on his other side; on the morrow he should have once more to get under the douche at six o'clock in the morning. He really did not need, in vacation time, to pull the wool over my eyes, but even today he tried to make me believe he was fond of bathing. Not to be outdone in courtesy, I pretended to be convinced of the fact. And so we separated with mutual satisfaction.

Now I stepped up to the housekeeper's chamber door. As yet, the resounding report — one could hear it all over the house — with which at evening her bolt was drawn, and in the morning drawn back, had not announced to us that Donna Leocadia de Silva Soares e Pimentel had arrayed herself for contact with the hostile sex; therefore I cautiously approached the door and listened. But when I heard the sound of footsteps within, going back and forth with a tread appropriate to the name as well as to the bodily frame of the Senhora, I plucked up courage, knocked, and, retreating a pace, reported that I should breakfast in town. At the moment I could have said little that would have been more agreeable to the lady. Now she was most happily relieved of the necessity of dressing decently, early

this blessed morning, merely in order to place a cup on the table before me and fill it with coffee; nevertheless, she assured me in the most touching tones of her regret that she must dispense with my agreeable company and drink her coffee alone. I replied that her regret was a source of pride to me, made a bow to the door, and departed.

In the courtyard I found the five black brethren still perching on the shed roof; I tried to scare them away by clapping my hands; they did not refer this action to themselves.

When I passed under the window of Donna Leocadia, it opened with a crash, and in a white dressing jacket that had been kept out of the wash for quite too long a time, the overflowing forms of the upper part of the lady's body settled into an easy position in the window frame. She bowed her head of black hair done up in blue and red curlpapers, and rolled her fine great stupid brown eyes. I merely waved my hat and strode on. At the garden gate I met the mulatto boy Alcides, who was just bringing the breakfast rolls in an open basket from the main house of the institution, across the street. I stopped him and asked why he was again carrying the bread in an open basket, instead of throwing a napkin over it, as he was supposed to do.

"Forgot it," he replied with an unconcerned shrug; for one had to speak to him more emphatically. I therefore selected from the Portuguese vocabulary of abuse, which is as massive and opulent as that of any Romance language whatever, a few juicy morsels, and swore that if this carelessness happened again I would shut the fellow up in the dark chamber and give him twenty-four hours to fix his duty in mind. He made a grimace.

"You may thank God," I cried, "that I haven't any gloves on. If I had, I would pound your face until you hadn't an eye or a tooth left in the right place!"

He contemptuously showed his two porcelain rows of white teeth.

In anger I made for him — he turned round, and I drew back for a mighty kick; but to my disgrace, the mishued curmudgeon knew how to frustrate my effort; the heel of my boot came in all too slight touch with the hostile posterior, I was hurled about by the momentum of my shot that missed its mark, and suddenly stood facing in the opposite direction. I had to laugh at myself. But Alcides made a quick move round the corner of the house. Donna Leocadia, whose corpulence still filled the window, called to me that I was always too good-natured; I ought not to have let the rascal run away, but ought to have banged his head several times against the wall. Then with an undulating lurch she got up and stepped back from the window, to receive the fellow in her room; she was not so squeamish as I, and she generally, moreover, had not washed her hands.

In the most cheerful frame of mind I now walked along the streets, which were still fairly cool with the freshness of the morning. I bought a copy of the latest newspaper, seated myself in the cane chair of a bootblack, got a shine, and read my paper. Then I entered a café and in deliberate European comfort sipped a cup of coffee with cream, and pitied the Brazilians, who hastily sat down at the nearest table they could find, stirred an enormous quantity of sugar in their thimbleful of coffee, poured the mixture down their throats, and rushed out into the street again, as though there or elsewhere they had anything whatever to do. I enjoyed my coffee as much as one can enjoy good coffee, and did not commit the impropriety of ordering a second cup, but bought of the tobacconist in the establishment a package of those cigarettes — not so much good, as genuine, Brazilian — which are rolled in corn straw instead of in paper. Leaning against a door-post, I remained standing there, gazed across the street, unrolled one of the cigarettes, poured the granular black tobacco into the palm of my hand, decanted it back into the corn leaf, and lighted the preparation. I looked across the street

and was infinitely happy, though there was not much to see. Only a few people were passing in one direction or the other, for the most part with a newspaper fresh from the press in their hands. One man stood at the curb and had his boots blacked. A street car went rumbling by; the driver lashed his mules, one of which kicked out behind and struck the dashboard with both hoofs a thwack that resounded the length of the street.

Throwing away the stub of my cigarette, I now started off and loitered along. What should I do? Go to the book store and look at French books — continue my reading in Faubert's letters? No hurry; nobody will buy them anyway! The air is still too fine.

Or shall I go to the editorial rooms of the German newspaper and see my friend from Vienna, smoke a decent cigar, talk over the news, talk about young Vienna, about Hermann Bahr who in his *furor teutonicus* smashed a beer mug on the head of a Bohemian? About Loris, who is still a very young man, not permitted as yet to go alone to join his literary friends at the café — his father insists upon accompanying him — "I tell you what, a marvelous genius!"—?—But the upshot of the matter will be, he will lock me in when I am not noticing, and will keep me there until I have ground out an article for his paper. And the weather is really too fine for that.

Thereupon I was roused from my revery by a breath of sultry fragrance. I turned in the direction from which I heard footsteps, and caught sight of the tropical profile of a young lady, who with eyes looking straight ahead was going her way. Her simple, handsome face was not yellow, but of a hot-blooded, fine brown, which as the sign of aboriginal vitality is charming, and immediately made me breathe hard. Now, as if by chance, a calm glance of the great dark eye, the white of which was as soft as mother of pearl, fell upon me, and then a second, quick glance, which toppled me over like a stroke of lightning; thereupon the profile was turned somewhat rigidly forward

again. Never losing sight of the daintily plump figure in the white lace gown, I gradually made way for her to pass by me; and if I had taken pleasure in contemplation of the face, I took, if possible, still more pleasure in contemplation of the easy walk which animated her whole body with its graceful rhythm.

In this manner we approached a cross street.

Then, as she stepped down from the sidewalk, she made a false calculation and swung herself somewhat too far forward; her foot came down hard upon the pavement, her whole body felt the shock, she stumbled, and her beauty was gone as quickly as a house built of cards collapses. I stood still for a moment, then I turned in my tracks, saying, "What a Bœotian and Hyperborean you are! Is there anything more fragile than enjoyment? Is there anything more sensitive to injury than grace? Did you not know that? If you had not followed this poor girl, she would have cleared the barrier as gracefully as a kitten; now she is as much ashamed as though you had seen her in her petticoat." I looked once more in her direction; sure enough, she too was looking round, with a flushed face and stupid, anxious eyes. O these soulful eyes, eyes like the roe, the antelope, the gazelle, or any other creature known to zoölogy. God be with them, and spare me!

Now I at once knew where to go and turned my steps toward the new streets farther out in the country, which are occupied principally by Germans. There I had a kind of sweetheart, all for the sake of her eyes. This had come to pass as follows:

After I had been several months in this beautiful and affluent country, and, whether in the midst of my boys at school or among the people at the theatre, in the circus, or in the café, kept seeing in the women, to whom I paid eager attention, always the same great dark eyes, these eyes began to pall upon me. Why? In Germany, by contrast to our cerulean blue, steel blue, greenish, and iron gray eyes, brown ones had often seemed to me especially beautiful

and touched my heart as nothing else could do. Now they bored me. Always the same apparent expression of strength, which goes back to the contrast between the dark pupil and the surrounding white, and in turn between this white and the dusky skin; always, even on the most indifferent occasions, this pregnant glance, this rolling and melting! "Anyhow," I asked myself one day, "why have all these people replaced their human eyes with the eyes of animals?" I began, when on the streets, to look about for light-colored eyes, for glances which had something of the clearness of the sky or the wave in spring time, something of the lustre and translucency of a November mist, something of the keen brilliancy of an ice crystal. I paid attention once more to the people of the Northern Hemisphere, whom heretofore I had avoided, and these people of the North are, of course, mostly Germans.

Now it happened that one morning in those days I was going my way, and, in order to keep in the shade, sticking as closely as might be to the houses. Then out of a low window in the ground floor of one of these houses a hand shot out right before me, holding a dust-cloth, which it was about to shake; and I should naturally have got the full benefit of the operation. With a quick grasp I seized the hand by the wrist; and not until I had so secured myself could I look up to see to whom the hand belonged. The girl stood inclined somewhat forward, leaning on her other hand, and stared at me with great startled eyes, the most transparent, silvery-gleaming eyes that I remember ever to have seen.

I was so surprised that I lost all my audacity; but I still kept a firm hold of her hand. And so she was after all the first to recover her power of speech, and she said, "Pardon me."

"On the contrary, I thank you," I replied, rising on my toes, kissing her hand, and then releasing it.

She made no answer, her expression became troubled, she struggled with herself, her eyes filled with tears, and

I felt that I had done violence to an innocent heart. That pained me and I blurted out, "Shake the cloth in my face! I have offended you. It was not my intention; but let me have my punishment."

"Not for the world!" she responded. "How can a man say such a thing!"

I looked at her in amazement and curiosity. Was that meant to be a reprimand? Did she strike a blow and pretend the while to put far away from her any such intention? No. Her eyes beamed appeasement and also appeasingly; surrendering myself to her, I had disarmed her resentment. Nevertheless, I continued, "He who can say such a thing has no right, then, to wear hair on his face? I shall presently go straight to the barber's. I have been so proud of my manliness! But — repulsed with loss! And, to make a clean breast of it, for an opportunity like this I would gladly remain a foolish youth a long while yet; like silly Jack, you know, in the fairy tale, who is always doing foolish things; but the princess with the blue eyes does not think any the worse of him on that account!"

Pricking up her ears and collecting her thoughts, she looked at me half roguishly out of the corner of her eye; then she shook her head with its heavy braids and said, "I do not understand you. You are so comical. You must talk quite simply to me."

She looked so charmingly simple that I forgot my speech and watched her standing there, so youthful and radiant in the window frame, against the dark background of the room. Everything about her was healthful and strong: her figure in the blue washable dress, her round throat, her well formed face, in which eyes and teeth gleamed brightly; but the abundance of her chestnut braids was so heavy that her neck seemed hardly able to support them.

"What sort of follies did silly Jack commit?" she asked when I became silent.

"I don't know myself; but when he came to woo the princess, and was asked what present he had brought her,

he pulled a handful of mud out of his pocket and filled her white hands with it. She liked that so well that she took him for her husband."

"A handful of mud! Such a dirty fellow! Did she marry him?"

"Yes, indeed! The other suitors had brought her jewels and crowns — she had plently of those already. But with mud she would have been glad to play, like other children, if the court ladies had allowed her to. Therefore she now rejoiced in her childish heart, and she thought he would certainly be the pleasantest husband for her."

"Yes, yes — the fact of the matter is, she was right."

Thus it began, and so it continued.

She was the daughter of a German cabinet-maker, who had developed his business until he had a prosperous furniture factory. Two years before, her mother had died, and since that time she had run the household with the most complete devotion, in the way that she had learned, and as befitted her single-minded, unsophisticated nature. She did all her work as though it were a benefaction, with whole-souled joy and boundless happiness in her ability. As often as my way led me near to where she lived, and that was almost daily at the same hour, I looked in at her window and found her always occupied with some sort of work. We chatted for a quarter of an hour; she told me what animated her day, asked me about everything that interested her in my existence, and initiated me into the sphere of her domestic cares. It pleased her that my needs were few; but that I did not even feel the need of damming up the briskly flowing stream of my income and making a little lake of it, this appeared to her as frivolity, indeed as unrighteous, and she endeavored to reform me, to make me more aware of the value of money, of the money that I had earned, and in some measure to guide my expenditures. I do not mean to say that she ever made tiresome reprimands or admonitions. Simple and innocent as her mind was,— whenever she had resolved to bring pressure to bear

upon my indifference or my wilfulness, she pondered the possible method with such affectionate patience that she did not fail to find a delicate or a touchingly irresistible form. I once brought her a rare orchid, whose fantastic form and brilliant colors I had so much admired in the shop window that I was unwilling to allow any other human being to possess it than Mariandel — by this name I called my friend. She did not say anything so commonplace as that I ought not to have done it, or I ought not to have spent so much money; she showed the honest joy of a child who is proud to have received such a costly gift; but she added to her praise of the flower, "It is sacred!"

The expression seemed to me somewhat pompous, as many of her expressions were; nevertheless, I could not but nod assent, thinking of the virgin forest in which this flower first gleamed forth through the twilight, as a new miracle rising out of the ruins of innumerable generations of trees. But Mariandel then continued, "It is a part of your life."

I smiled in astonishment.

"Perhaps you have given for it the hardest and unhappiest of your days of toil."

Such a thought as that did not come into her head on the spur of the moment. I knew at once that she had excogitated it, and kept it in reserve for a good opportunity of impressing upon my mind what my money was. And then for days at a time I strove not to employ my money in ways that ran counter to her honest feeling.

Neither in the city nor in the country did I know anything that afforded me a purer, more genuine joy than my meetings with this imperturbable, self-contained woman. We had rapidly come to confidential terms with one another, so that one day without consultation or emotion we said "Du" to each other — I do not even know whether it was she or I who began the practice.

And now I was once more walking along the broad, hot street with the one-storied houses, once more on the same

side in the shade, which today, to be sure, was deeper than the first time; for it was still early morning. And now I stood by the window, put my arms on the window-sill and said, "Good morning, Mariandel, sweetmeats!" And she stood before an ironing board which rested on the window-sill and the table, and was ironing with a charcoal flat-iron. She put the iron down on the rest, gave me her firm, warm hand, and said, "*Bom dia, senhor doutor! Passa bem?*" and her eye seemed to beam more cordially than ever, and yet could not express more cordiality than it had expressed before.

She seated herself by the window, put her right hand on the sill, above which my head and shoulders protruded, and began to speak, turning her head in such a way that I saw now her profile, with the inconspicuous but firm lines of her nose, mouth, and chin, and the heavy braids of her lustrous hair about her neck, now her full face beaming upon me; then, however, I forgot all her other beauty, in contemplation of the incomprehensibly reposeful and unsullied blue of her eye. I was never in love with her; never had the sight of her or thoughts of her taken my breath away; but never was I so full of joyous love for a human being as then for her.

After she had asked questions about this and that and had told me all sorts of things, she said, "Professor, don't let me forget to tell you: George Bleyle down there at the *Mercadinho* is not having very good trade, they say; if you need anything, just bear him in mind. He has bought at bottom prices a whole invoice of men's furnishings that was put up at auction down at the dock, and things are very cheap at his shop just now."

And she told what she had purchased for her father, and what her sister-in-law had got for her husband, named the prices, and praised the quality of the goods. I gazed first at her eyes, then at the glowing coals within the flat-iron, listened to the tones of her dear, faithful voice and thought of my home of long ago, of brothers and sisters and friends,

of a home of my own with wife and children in it, of things dear and compelling, for which I could stake my life; and I tasted the sweetness of one of those moments which do their best to broaden our hearts, to strengthen them and renew their allegiance.

All at once she stopped speaking, and when I did not notice this she cried out, "Senhor, are you again failing to listen to me?" "Oh, yes. Henrique Bleyle has put up at auction a cargo of furnishing goods —"

"*O não, senhor*, not at all! But you are a discourteous good-for-nothing; you think, 'Just let her talk!'"

"Missed by a mile, my child! I have been listening to you without hearing what you said. Look, when I sit down on the curb of a fountain and let myself be enveloped and captivated by its splashing and tinkling, its silvery spraying, and forget everything, even the fountain, and think uncommonly pure and good thoughts — don't these thoughts come from the fountain? Do I not hear them in its plashing, even though I no longer hear the sound of it, and am I, in this absent-mindedness, not more the bondman of the fountain than if I had counted its drops of water? That is how it was just now. While I listened to your voice and felt your eye upon me, I learned something better from you than that Bleyle has socks for sale. Nevertheless, I shall buy the socks from him. But that you help me in my vanity and hastiness not merely to let serious thoughts enter my mind when they come like a stroke of lightning, but also quietly and modestly to admit them, to await them, and to attain to the inner core of their sweetness — that is to me more delightful and more important than all the cargoes of all the continents."

She looked at me with childlike confidence, put her little, warm hand on mine, and said, "You are not angry with me, Erwin?"

"How could I be angry with you for that? Is there a human being who could be angry with you? See, Mariandel, the only pain you cause me is the fact that I am not the only one who can take nothing ill of you!"

"Oh!" she cried, laughing down her shamefacedness like a school-girl, "just ask my brother and his wife whether they cannot take anything ill of me!"

"Then they are not human beings. There aren't so very many."

"No, my brother is good," she replied, "and Anna too."

"In any case, I shall prove to you that I am ready to help my fellow-man. I shall buy of Henrique Bleyle a complete new outfit from head to foot, and hope thereby to save him from bankruptcy."

"Not Henrique Bleyle, but George Bleyle at the *Mercadinho*, and there is no question of bankruptcy. For Heaven's sake don't say anything of the kind!" She looked at me in the utmost confusion and with guilty eyes; she had of course emphasized the fact that business was bad — as it was in general at that time — merely in order to induce me to buy of George Bleyle, since she feared she could not make me budge by speaking only of the cheapness of his wares.

Now I gave her great pleasure by inquiring at exactly what prices she had made her purchases, and by asking for advice of various sorts. I did not get much profit from this; the effort to distinguish between linen, cotton-warp linen, cotton, shirting, and *fil d'Écosse* caused me something of a headache. But she was all joy and eagerness.

Then she had to use her iron while it was hot. She lifted one end of the ironing board, drew a light calico gown over it like a ring, put the board down again, and ironed, gradually letting the whole of the gown travel across the board.

The shade in which I stood grew smaller, the heat penetrated markedly nearer to me and awakened my daily desire to go to the city park and sit in the shade of its giant trees and bamboo bushes. I lighted a cigarette at one of the little glowing eyes of the charcoal flat-iron, and started away.

"*Ate logo, senhor!*" said she, using a phrase that corresponds exactly to the Rhenish "So long!" Since she

did not know much Portuguese, she took pleasure in seizing all opportunities to use the most current expressions; but she used these with such perfect pronunciation that you would suppose she had complete command of the language.

As was always the case, I was in a peaceful frame of mind when I left her, I was filled with a sense of cosy comfort which gained all the more piquancy because flavored with an infinitely delicate bitterness that I could not understand. In a revery I strolled along through the streets which, because the diminutive houses cast so little shadow, became hotter every minute, and passed slowly out of the city.

When I looked up again, I had already passed through the great gate in the wall and felt as though immersed in the more expansive and, from the intermittent shade of shrubs and trees, more invigorating atmosphere of the great park. I stood still and peered into the depth of the garden through the silver-gray columns of two gigantic palms. Thickly surrounded by dark shrubs with a silvery sheen, enormous hedges, and groves of bamboo, a fountain reared the fluttering banner of its spray from the midst of a black pool confined within a white curb; but the bubbling pillar did not attain to the height of its dark sylvan background. In the dim background, however, above the cold deep green of the park, rose a mighty erythrina like a rose-colored flame into the rich blue air, like a monstrous, fiery syringa. The light coursed hotly down the smooth trunks of the palms, golden white it curled about the gentle curve of their slender hips, like frozen silver it weighed upon the serrated palm-leaves, often seeming to slip down and fall, so that the liberated leaf gave a little leap upward into a new bath of silver; the rigid leaves of black-green bushes were sown with immobile, penetrating scintillations; above the masses of dagger-sharp leaves in the grove of bamboo the light swarmed like a golden vapor rolling up, as it were, in itself; red and white and deep violet and yellow and iridescent blue flowers of gigantic size cowered in the dark

green; the erythrina stood quietly there upright like a mountain of fire; everything rested voluptuously, or overwhelmed, in the glow of the higher-mounting sun — only the snowy importunity of the fountain wore itself out in impotent resistance to his sway. I too stood motionless in an unshaded opening; I no longer felt the glow as a burden; with rapture, with awe, with rapture I felt its untamable creative energy — just as years before, one cold winter night, I had felt its lust of destruction at a conflagration in a village of my mountain home,— the one as wild, as inexorable as the other.

For a long while I stood thus absorbed in meditation, until suddenly I became conscious that something or other disturbed, disquieted, irritated me. I spied about, and found that at quite a distance away, near a low bosket of light green, a head covered by a yellow straw hat emerged and vanished again in rhythmical alternation. I recognized the chief gardner of the city park, a German with whom I was well acquainted. I went slowly up to him and was about to ask him what game he was playing — I had almost taken him for a ghost — when I observed in his hand a small basket nearly half filled with leaves. The handsome, well preserved old man with the shrewd, kindly, white-bearded face told me now that these bushes with the grayish green, lanciform little leaves were Chinese tea, and that he was picking the two or three outside leaves on each twig in order to dry them for his domestic consumption. I listened while he informed me of the details of tea culture and the curing of the crop; then, having at the moment to take off my hat and wipe the sweat from my brow, I said, "How would it be, do you think, if, just for a change, one could follow one's nose to Germany and bury it in snow or hoarfrost? At this instant perhaps the sleighs are jingling along and the skaters are on the ice, or the south wind is driving its blue-gray mist over the Alps — "

He interrupted me with a shake of his head, and added: "— and everybody is coughing and spitting and wiping

his nose, while the rich are wrapped in furs like the Greenlanders and the poor are starving and freezing. That is no joke, especially for such old bones as mine. I no longer hanker for it. Not in this life! When you are as old as I am you will realize what a blessing the sun is. You complain of the heat; but I feel its benefit in the marrow of my bones and still deeper. I no longer run away from the sun. I have been more than forty years in Brazil, and I too often wonder how things look in the old town — whether they still loiter about the well, whether Hannah is still living, and how this one and that one is getting along. But — they have probably got along very much as I have myself, well and ill; they have grown old, if they are not dead already, and they are probably glad to be where it is warm. No, no! Not in this life!"

"'You are quite right! Later! It will be much more convenient when we are spirits. But then you must come to see me sometime; promise me, and do not forget your promise! I shall be established somewhere in the Black Forest, high up in the snow, alone in a great house. The storm is raging and the old timbers and wainscoting are creaking and groaning. I am smoking my pipe on a bench by the stove and staring into the flame of the burning candle. All of a sudden I hear some one clapping his hands outside, and as I listen there comes a call, '*O da casa! O da casa!*'

"'Hello!' I say, standing up, 'the Brazilian! He has kept his word. And he is just as courteous and respectful as ever!' I open the door for you, prepare a fine place for you on the bench, so that you may warm your tropical astral body, and give you the fur robe to wrap your poor spiritual feet in. Then you shall have coffee and cigarettes and fruit-cakes and a glass of genuine cherry brandy — anything you want! Then we will talk Portuguese, long for the Brazilian sun, and sing, I in a hoarse bass and you in a sweet spiritual tenor,

Minha terra tem palmeiras,
onde canta o sabia,
minha terra tem primores,
que eu nunca encontro ca."

He smilingly listened to me, smilingly shook his head and said, "You are an enviable youth! Every time I think of you I think that. As a child amuses himself at an annual fair, you scamper through the world, feast your eyes on what you like to look at, take your pleasure in what you see, and build air-castles out of these materials."

He continued to pluck his tea leaves; I stood silently by and marveled at his words, their truth and their error.

"Yes, there are such favorites of fortune," he continued. "As children build castles of sand, demolish them, and build them up again, so you build air-castles. When one of them has occupied you long enough, you turn your back upon it and build another; this is your pleasure, and you never tire of it. We others, when at the age of fifteen or sixteen we have come to our senses, we build a single air-castle: one sees himself as a prosperous farmer — as far as the eye can reach all the land is his; the other sees himself as a merchant, with a heavy golden chain on his paunch, standing at his shop-door; the third means to cultivate black roses and incidentally become a millionaire — and this castle in the air we cherish, and care for, and prop up, and support as long as we live, and for the most part we do not in the least notice that it has long since collapsed beyond repair. I have long thought I must tell you this some time, in order that you might know it and thank God!" He straightened up, looked me in the face, and nodded to me with kindly seriousness. With a smile I returned his nod.

He continued plucking leaves. In silence I watched him a while longer; for anything that I could have said in answer was no concern of his.

"Since my bones are as yet somewhat younger than yours," I remarked finally, "I will keep them fresh, and now take them into the shade."

We separated.

" Every one sees you in a different light from every one else," I said to myself as I walked along, " and even the wisest fails to see you as you are; for even the humblest human soul is like the sun, which one can gaze upon only through a dull medium."

Along shady paths I meandered toward the bamboo alley, which was like a grove, in that it formed a high vaulted way under closely interwoven branches, and its twilight was cool. Here I strode back and forth, sat down, wandered on again, in physical discomfort and mental instability. The old man had excited and aroused me; I pondered this and that, I could not stick to any subject whatever, I hurried from the hundredth to the thousandth thing and took some hurt from every one.

I sat down again, and again walked back and forth.

All at once I found myself at a cross path; I stopped involuntarily and thought, " I have stood here before; what is there here? " So it was. Two days before, I had here been struck by the fact that just above the knot on the bamboo stem there was a broad ring of blue-white hoarfrost, which blended imperceptibly with the greenish-yellow of the stem. In this fine congealed breath, I had thought at that time, one ought to write a secret message to one's sweetheart, in dainty characters, with a feather from a humming-bird's wing! Since I could not find a humming-bird, I had sharpened the end of a twig of bamboo, and with that had scribbled in the fragrant circlet the words, " Where art thou, beloved? "

Since then I had not again thought of the matter; but now I sought out the thick stem once more, and thought I ought to have written a poem on it, began to compose verses, and murmured:

A saudade no coração
mi e doce como o teu bejo —

then I stood a long time with my head down, trying to formulate the following verses; and finally I added:

vivrei d'esta consolação,
de ti, e se nunca te vejo!

and once more looked for the stem bearing the inscription from the previous visit. I found it, and was almost terrified when underneath my words, "Where art thou, beloved," I read inscribed in the dainty hand of a woman, "Here I am."

I was amazed; then I smiled with joy, and my heart beat violently, as on the eve of an adventure. My Portuguese verses did not fit now, and I meditated a jolly, German answer; but I was too unskilful in my excitement and could not compose anything with any sense to it. I had to think too much of the writer. Who was she, and what did she look like?

Finally I took out my dagger, sharpened a twig of bamboo to the finest of points, and after I had assured myself that I was unobserved, I wrote simply,

Whether there or here,
Be with me, dear!

Once more I strode back and forth. Then it occurred to me that so long as I remained in the park I could observe from some hiding-place whether any one read the inscription.

My bamboo stood right at the intersection of a smaller path and the bamboo alley, and could be seen from a distance. I accordingly followed the cross path and came thus into the dark green bosket out of which the erythrina stood towering. From a distance it seemed as though the flowering giant were closely surrounded by the smaller trees and bushes; but if one stepped through the green hedge, one found in the centre of it a great open circle, like the hallowed precinct of a sacred tree; out of the ground rose massively the mighty trunk, showing in clear outline its flower-laden branches, of which the lower ones were far extended and dipped their fiery burden deep in the surrounding thicket. Beneath the tree was a bench; from it I could, to the left, look back along the path and into the

bamboo alley, while straight ahead an opening in the bushes afforded a view of the fountain and the middle of the garden.

I seated myself in the hedged-in sultry air, which seemed to have been very little cooled by the night, and dreamed of the expected sweetheart. I gazed to the left and saw the sunbathed stems and twigs of bamboo stand out clearly and prettily on the dark shady background; and looked straight ahead and saw the fountain spraying and foaming, and often in the tea plantation observed the old man bend forward and rise erect again.

What did she look like? Like this woman and that woman who had before now found favor in my sight? Hardly; in that case those other women would have held me captive. How must she be? Black, white, or red — that cannot matter. Her eyes will take me, her lips will intoxicate me, because they are hers! She will be such that my eye will no more estimate and compare, that my mind will no more dream and desire, that I shall feel she is she, and acknowledge her as the only power outside myself; so that my heart, my brain, and every fibre of my flesh will glow under the same compulsion to take from itself this body and spirit now subject to another will than mine, to transform it, to engraft it upon my being, whether for life or for death, to consume it, to drain it up as the sole valid increase of my existence! I shall feel myself to be a force nevermore divisible!

Her hair will be curly and of the soft brown of an old walnut, and, like the shell of a walnut, her twisted braids will surround the back of her head — and her eyes gray as a German lake in May, when clouds hover over it and the wind chases bright electric sparks over the waves . . . her hair may also be black, and her eyes brown like snuff; but her heart must be strong, so that a man may succumb to it!

My eyes watched the bamboo alley and saw the littlest

leaves and the tiniest twigs gently quiver in the heat. Nothing else. She did not come.

I peered into the park through the opening in the bushes: in the purest brightness the fountain waved its spray over the tops of the shrubs and palms up into the blue, vibrating air. And the old gardener continued his plucking of tea leaves, rising a little and bending again at every short step, almost unreal in this noiseless, torrid realm. I turned my eyes back to the bamboo. I was aglow with heat, perhaps also with expectation; my heart throbbed convulsively and irregularly — and reminded me of a telegraphic key in an empty, sun-heated railway station, which, left to itself, ticks incessantly.

For a long while I sat occupied with my thoughts and staring at the same spot. Suddenly I had a feeling as though there were a shaking of twigs in the upper part of my particular bamboo. I looked sharply; there was another gentle agitation, a quiver of the stems and leaves, as though some one had struck against the trunk below; — only at this one spot. Then all was calm again.

I grew impatient. She is not coming! Mayhap she will come as soon as I am gone, and when I return I shall find an answer. I stood up, stretched myself, and walked slowly toward the bamboo alley.

In passing, I glanced once more at the place of the inscription, and looked fixedly at it, and examined it still more closely, and breathed audibly, and my heart thumped. Beneath my words,

> Whether there or here,
> Be with me, dear!

there were now written in dainty characters the words,

> I am.

The green avenue was empty. Nobody had passed through here; I had seen nobody stop at this spot. And yet she was here, and had written her answer! In sudden embarrassment I took a step backward, and involuntarily

asked, "You are here? Here with me?" My voice was so hollow that I myself noticed its unnaturalness. "*With* me?" I repeated, sighing, unable to comprehend. And then, like a liberation, a feeling of terror and awe thrilled my whole being, and I looked down upon myself cautiously, almost timidly, as though thereby I might injure somebody. In vague apprehension I turned quite around until I again faced the inscribed bamboo trunk.

"You are here — with me — ?" I whispered. "Verily — I saw how you took hold of the bamboo to write on it, and let it go again, so that it quivered. I saw that you were here, even though at present I cannot see you. You — are — with me?" I could speak no more; my heart beat slowly and hard, like a rubber hammer that I could feel even up to my throat and ears; a mute, voluptuous rapture filled my soul, a pride, a sense of triumph, such as peradventure the chosen one feels when in the midst of the multitude he realizes his good fortune and reveals it to no man.

"Come!" I said finally, waited a moment to let her take the lead, and then strode composedly back to the erythrina; and leaving the place at my right vacant for her, I seated myself upon the bench. I did not stir, I sat there quietly, shuddering with rapture and expectation, and at the same time depressed by the impotence of my clumsy senses, to which I yielded only with difficulty.

I waited — I waited. Was she there? Had she not followed me at all? Have I driven her away? Must I act otherwise?

Then I felt a brushing of my right cheek, and my whole body fluttered upward. I looked down in her direction and saw that an erythrina blossom had grazed my cheek and fallen close beside me upon the bench. I gazed at it lying fiery there upon the gray wood; I quieted myself and collected my faculties. I said to myself, "Do not lose your self-control! Do not let yourself be submerged! No anxiety! No terror! There is nothing contrary to nature! All being is spirit. If she is here, she will reveal her presence again, more plainly, as distinctly as you can bear.— "

I looked straight ahead and perceived that the gray-garbed old man with the little basket in his hand was slowly traversing the quivering glassy air of the garden; I saw him disappear behind the snowy spray of the fountain, reappear again on the other side, and then vanish in the bushes. I felt as though I had been left alone in the world and were about to be lost forever; I listened for some bird or other creature, and was happy to hear the shriek of a parrot and the hissing of the fountain through the ardent air.

I waited immovably.

Suddenly, whether because a breath stirred the air or because weary ripeness released them, suddenly a shower of blossoms descended from the branches, and erythrina flowers rained down upon my head, neck, shoulders, and arms, into my lap, upon the grass at my feet, like heavy drops of fire from burning torches. I surveyed their resting places round about; the space at my right had remained empty; not a single blossom had lighted upon the bench on this side of me, while to my left a handful lay scattered. I turned again toward the right: before and behind the bench the blossoms gleamed from the grass; unless some one were sitting there, the place could not but have been covered with blossoms! I drew a deep breath of excitement — bliss — sweet awe. The weary blossoms continued to fall; and now I was aware how, above the place at my right, they scattered in the air in every direction, how they were pressed to the right and left, front and back, and how some trickled down slowly and hesitatingly, as though impeded by garments.—

I forcibly released myself from the strange spell, stood up, took a step forward, and turned round. Where I had just been sitting, four or five blossoms were already gleaming from the gray wood — next to that place the bench was still uncovered.

In wonderment I stood there and gazed. And now I felt, I saw, how, gradually, as from a delicate haze, outlines and shadowy forms emerged and rounded out. With my bodily

eyes I saw, like a colorless picture mirrored in running water, the forms of a head and oval face, fine, gently sloping shoulders, arms symmetrically bent, with clasped hands; and, as though through a gray veil, I saw crystal clear eyes beam upon me.

My heart was almost broken with happiness and intolerably growing desire; lifting my hands, I sank down before her and kissed the place where the shadow of her feet fell upon the grass. Then I looked upon the crystal orbs of her eyes, lifted my hands high in supplication, and stammered, "Dearest, help me! Appear to me! Come forth to me! Let me hear the sound of your voice! Let me know your heart and learn what is your will!"

She did not stir; the cold gleam of her eyes did not turn away from me; methought two sharp rays of icy air pierced me; I froze, I froze, and in torture I cried, "What is your wish? What shall I do?"—

My cry sounded to me as horrible as a crime; her eyes flashed white and were extinguished; and I saw her no more. Shivering with cold and despair I remained on my knees and waited to see whether she would not come again.

An eternity of time passed by.

Then I perceived that another rain of fiery blossoms descended, and covered her place too.

I arose painfully and groaning; hopeless, I left the bench and hastened with weak tottering steps to get into the sun. Warmth, burning heat was the only thing I was still able to wish for. Near to the rustling of the water, I lay down on a bench in the glaring sun; and when I there, as it were, felt the icy frame within me slowly melt, when the cold sweat on my skin dried up, and the cold shivers ebbed away in warmth — then I breathed easily, with infinite inspirations of rapture which were near to bursting my lungs; then I inwardly rejoiced, as though I had barely escaped death and after the last leap of my strength had sunk down exhausted by the gate of the promised land. Have patience; the gate will be opened. Confidence in this hope surged through me like blood newly revived.

Whence came she? Where is she now? Have I driven her away?

Was the happiness passing all understanding, the rapture like unto none ever experienced, was this not enough? Oh, that I could not refrain from asking more and urging for more! Did she not give me more than I had believed possible only an hour before? Was it weakness, that I felt her eyes pierce me like icy arrows? Must I not have frightened and driven her away by that shriek of the weak beast in me? What a wretched creature I am! Have I not always found cause for discontent in women; were they not always in my sight too much of the earth earthy — mothers from the first? And now, when one who steals away to me from who knows what distant body, a thrilling emotion, an unearthly powerful light, then I tremble in terror like a child before the evil one! I have wounded her, have frightened her away with my shriek for flesh and blood!

But she will come again! From the far distance something has impelled her to come hither, I have drawn her here to me; for only in me on earth does she find her portion, as also I only in her; and if we miss each other, we shall forever suffer the penalty. She will come again. I shall learn patience; I shall purify my strength of all gross capacity for feeling pain; I shall endure to stand in the presence of her strength, and shall grow to be like unto her!

I did not now expect her again on this day, and the garden was desolate to me; but I could not leave it. For hours long I lay here, sat there, went hither and thither along the untraveled paths; and only when visitors became more numerous, so that I could no longer avoid them, late in the afternoon, I turned toward home.

Returning from their vacation, the scholars soon began to reoccupy the boarding school; I had to answer inquiries, make arrangements, and take counsel with the housekeeper and the director. My heart and mind were, however, so

full of other matters and so far away from these, that I performed all my duties with the greatest good-nature and serviceableness, very much as, while at work, you stroke and scratch your dog with your free hand.

In this manner I passed the evening hours.

The night, however, I passed with little sleep, and much meditation and wakeful dreaming. Then it became evident to me that I was just beginning an apprenticeship to love. And the first lesson showed me that a weak, deluded, selfish heart must suffer pain and torture through love. For love is not yielding, pitiful, indulgent, self-surrendering; it is proud, compelling, inexorable as beauty, as God Himself, who certainly does not love those to whom He is gracious and merciful, and who has never yet taken pity on His elect. In such thoughts I bathed, as in the icy morning dew of the mountains, for the coming day.

When my duties of the forenoon were over, I hastened through the already scorching heat to the park, into the bamboo alley, under the erythrina, where I sat down.

For a long while I waited, and saw and felt nothing indicative of her presence, and was nevertheless sure she would come. The bamboo scarcely trembled in the blue heat of the sky. The dark trees and shrubs kept still, as though not to frighten away the swarm of silver lights that had descended upon them for rest. Unchangeable, flowing only back upon itself, stood the pillar of spray of the distant fountain dazzlingly in the air; its splashing resounded indistinctly. Only rarely, as though waved by an indolent fan, a hot current of air rolled over to me and eddied about me, sweet and comforting.

I looked over toward the fountain, and there she sat on the marble curbing of the pool.

Briskly I arose and went toward her with measured steps. She had disappeared. I seated myself upon a shady bench over against the place that she had occupied. Soon she returned with flowers in her hand, and without looking at me, seated herself once more upon the marble.

She was as delicate as a shade. An oval face with severe profile, surrounded by nut-brown hair; I could not see her eyes. Her drapery was of cobweb-colored gauze, the clasp of her girdle a simple buckle of soft, shaded vermilion. Face and hands were bloodlessly pale; her figure tall, slight, and fine. Thus she sat there; delicately, and yet with color and warmth, she contrasted with the spraying banner of foam of the fountain. She did not stir. I did not take my eye from her. Once something whirred through the air before her and I saw a humming-bird descend upon the lily blossoms in her hand. And darting back and forth, the gleaming little bird flew several times back to her flowers, so still was she.

This motionlessness filled me with sadness on account of my folly of the preceding day, and oppressed me. I cautiously stepped up to her and remained standing in front of her, to see whether she would not raise her eyes; but she made no sign. Then I could not help falling upon my knees, and my eyes sought hers. Her transparent face, her half-closed eyes made no movement. Without a sound I got up from my knees and returned to my bench. Then she arose, walked slowly round the glowing white marble ring of the pool, and vanished in the shrubbery beyond, without my venturing to follow her.

I remained at my place and recalled again and again to my eyes how she sat there at the edge of the water, could not be forced to lift up her countenance upon me, and still gave me so much happiness. Could I have endured more? — how she, noiselessly and gracefully waving the folds of her soft flowing garment, slowly glided about the fountain, like a fairy of old, and bestowed upon my last glance the never-failing comfort of beauty.

Not until the hour of my duty at the boarding school drew near in the late afternoon did I drag myself away and forsake the park.

I performed my duty according to my custom.

As soon as duty was over on the following morning I found myself on the way to the city park.

Suddenly I was aroused at hearing my name called. I looked up and saw Mariandel standing in her window, stared at her, and came to my senses, and felt the desiccating heat of the day.

"Do you mean to run by again?" the girl asked in surprise.

"I was thinking," I answered.

"And yesterday you were thinking so hard that you did not even hear me call after you!—How you look!" she cried in sudden apprehension.

"I do not know of anything. How do I?"

"Worn out! Terribly! Have you been revelling all night?"

"Revelling!" I murmured with a smile, and relapsed into my revery.

"But what is the matter with you? Erwin!"

"I don't sleep well."

"Are you writing verses again all night long?"

I shook my head.

"And in what condition you come along here! You neither see nor hear anything!"

I grew impatient and said, "I am thinking; excuse me!" and went on quickly, paying no more attention to what she called after me.

I entered the gate of the park, and stopped. My eye took in the welcome sight of all the familiar things, the sparkling sandy paths, the silvery sheen of the grass, the dark shrubbery, the ragged umbelliform palms, the ceaselessly foaming gush of water, the feathery forest of bamboo, the blossoming of the giant trees—I breathed the heat-refined, insinuating air, heavy with perfume, and suddenly I felt my heart relieved, and delighted, and secure, as though I were entering my home.

I went right through the garden, past the pool, to the bamboo alley. There came Mara from the brightness at the other end, slowly through the green vault to meet me. So long as she was at a distance she looked at me. I saw

only the penetrating, mighty gleam of her eyes, and nothing more; almost as unbearable as two stars they shone out from under the shade of her great straw hat. Approaching, she cast down her eyes; and now the winsome swaying of her tall figure, as she easily moved along, caused such a rush of rapture to surge through me that I would have prostrated myself on the ground, merely that she might pass over me. But I restrained myself. I said, "God greet you," and stepped up to her side. Without another word we wandered on together.

To adapt my pace to hers, to be able with my hand to stroke the soft folds of her garment, to have the privilege of gazing at the sharp profile of her white face, the shade of her dark lashes, the pale redness of her lips — this happiness was so great that for a long time the desire to speak did not come over me.

Finally I asked, and my heart beat anxiously, "Who are you? Are you called Mara? Whence do you come? Counsel me!"

Now she raised her hand slightly, with a deprecating gesture; we went silently on again, and I was not again able to escape the dominance of her will. Could anything better befall me than being with her? Can one sign of love give more happiness than another? It may be a different one, but not meant to be more genuine.

Suddenly she got somewhat ahead of me. I started to catch up with her, but did not exert myself especially, and the distance between us grew still greater. Mara crossed the garden; try as I might, I remained farther and farther behind; she strode ever farther from me, disappeared in the bushes, appeared again, then vanished never to return.

Oh, that I might at least have said good-by to her, have touched her garment only once more, have looked once more into her mysterious eyes!

I sought for her in the whole gigantic park. I sat for a long time on the marble curbing of the pool, where yesterday she had tarried, under the erythrina also for a long

time; in the green light of the bamboo alley I walked and dreamed — dreamed of the solution of this riddle.

I stayed away from a class with which I was supposed to resume work this afternoon, and did not return to the boarding school until the wonted hour had struck.

On this night I could get no more real sleep than on the nights before. Whether I lay awake or dozed, my thoughts incessantly hovered about the mystery of these days, endeavored to overcome its fascination, and to see clearly. Was the rapture which this maiden's beauty gave me not a danger? Had I the right to let my pain at Mara's disappearance pass away in this rapture? Was the pain not just and rightful? Every love is a test of love, and one must meet the test! What must I nourish and justify within me, Mara's love or my love? If I yield and bow to the will of her love, how can I be faithful to mine? The love of man and woman shall be like two linden-trees which grow separately side by side, their tops only forming a single indistinguishable dome; but if one trunk leans upon the other, they will wound each other in the storm and will become crippled. Let the love of man and woman be like a sword with two edges; neither edge may grow dull out of love for the other, else they cannot unite to form a point. Let the love of two be the untroubled unity of the man and of the woman of purest essence, so that the man shall admit nothing womanish, and the woman nothing mannish into her being; else they will become a puzzling confusion, not a unity.

"Let the morrow be governed by my will!" I said to myself; and a dream, the only one to abide with me from among the fugitive half-dreams of the night — a dream confirmed my resolution, although it flowed like a tributary into the stream of the thoughts that I thought I had, and brought nothing surprising.

I saw Mara walking amidst the mountains of my home on a snowy night. Neither moon nor stars shone in the heavens, there was merely the faint gleam of the snow in

contrast to the edge of the dark forest; but Mara's figure was bright and of distinctive color, as she had appeared to me under the tropical sun. In red shoes she strode down the snow-clad river valley, stepped up to the dark houses, and peered in at the windows; immediately all the windows of the house were illumined as with the rays of a bright light, and became dark again when the maiden wandered on. Tirelessly she did the same thing at every house that faced toward the river, in every hamlet, the length of a long road. At last she came to my native town and to the house of red sandstone in which my mother lay in travail. Mara stretched, and grew, and looked in at the window; the house lighted up within and grew more and more light, flames flickered within, burst forth at all the windows, and united together above the high roof. Like a great scarlet flower the house stood there in the night, the light of the fire flowed over the snow in the yard and across the ice of the river, and illumined the snow-covered houses of the city on yonder side. From all the church steeples the clocks struck the first hour of the day, one after the other; when the sound of the last stroke died away, the fire in the house was suddenly extinguished, and once more I caught sight of Mara, who had eluded my eyes. She came out upon the highway, placed a naked baby boy on his feet in the snow beside her, and strode back the way she had come. The boy kept hold of a fold of her garment, and with his poor little legs trotted along beside her; his heavy head tottered in every direction, his eyes were tightly closed, and he uttered a plaintive croaking. Mara too had closed her eyes, a quiet joy animated her countenance, her feeling seemed to be far off from the poor little creature which, side by side with her, tramped up into the snowy forest.

With a shudder I had awaked, and after long pondering I had returned to my thoughts of the previous evening: yes, this day should be subject to my will!

And so in the morning I went at the wonted hour not into the park but into the city. Reading the paper, I stood in

squares and at cross-roads and waited. Ill at ease, I goaded myself through the streets, as though dragged hither and thither in a stream of molten metal; I loitered in the café and the bookshop. But my mind was so absorbed that the waiter or dealer who brought me what I had ordered startled me as if from sleep. My eye saw Mara wandering in the park, resting at the fountain, sitting beside me on the bench under the erythrina, transparent, like a figure formed of water, in a rain of drops of fire; and my heart was filled with a longing to which I had willed it should not yield.

At noon when, unheeding the shadeless heat, I sauntered toward a bridge which spanned the deep valley of the river — there in the middle of the road, engulfed by the undulating air, there walked Mara! The desire of my conceit, to avoid her, was of no avail against my overpowering joy. I stepped up to her. How daintily she moved in the obedient folds of her brownish-gray garment, beneath the hem of which the tip of her red shoe peeped out and disappeared again. Like a blossom of the softest red the clasp of her girdle shone beneath her breast. Her eyes seemed to me full of the joy of meeting again, as they gleamed forth from the shade of her hat. My will gave itself up and died, as shame dies. Whispering her name as a greeting, I turned round when I reached her, and by her side I retraced my steps. She looked straight ahead, a childlike smile softened the expression of her mouth, heretofore so serious, and her lips blossomed red in her white face. I strode along beside her and lost myself. Why do I not snatch her to my bosom? Why do I not kiss myself to death on her lips?

Yes — why did I not do that?

When I chanced to become aware that she avoided the populous streets, then indeed there came to me a fleeting consciousness, an angry pain at my weakness, and I turned into the main street. She remained by my side. If you do not do her will, then she will do yours. Because you

did not go to her, she came to you! And as I had purposed, I meant now to subject her to my will. But in my distracted excitement I could think out no plan; nothing occurred to me but to go aimlessly hither and thither, to turn back, and to stand still. And in this very inability I recognized how fully I was under her spell.

I began to speak.

"Mara, if you wish to put me to the test, give me a task that I can comprehend, that I can struggle with! This is playing a game that tortures me. You know my heart. It wears a mantle of pride, but under the mantle lurks melancholy; many a time it rises in its might, tears off the mantle, and treads its starched purple in the dust, and—" Mara gently placed her left hand, which was as cool as the folds of her garment, upon my right hand, so that my will retreated in fear within me. I thought, "How ridiculous to talk like that! In what poor taste—how did you come to do it? It was well that she interrupted you. And she knows everything; she knows more about you than you know about yourself." Ashamed, not daring to look at her, I walked along a short distance.

But soon I once more revolted against her power. In some way or other I must subdue her.

At a street corner I suddenly remained one pace behind her, turned into a side street, darted into a shop, and observed through the window how she, searching, came back the way that we had gone. Then I ran farther down the side street and through a passage way into another street, hastily, excitedly, almost beside myself.

All of a sudden I saw Mariandel standing amazed and waiting for me a few paces in advance. Her fine blue eyes were filled with tears, she held out her hand to me, and called out reproachfully and compassionately at the same time, "Erwin—!"

I barely touched her hand, whispered that I was in a hurry, and fled past her into another street. Mara, I thought, will surely know where I am; but by the time she

gets here, I shall be somewhere else. And spying around on all sides, I rushed on.

Behold, on the same road ahead of me there walked a lithe maiden of middle size, whose unexpected sight took my breath away and robbed my knees of their strength. In a dark-green woolen dress, as I had last seen her in Germany, she walked apparently absent-minded whithersoever her footsteps carried her. How many a time I had seen before me this childishly slender brown neck, this knot of dark hair; how often this hat on her arm as now, or in her slender brown hand. I longed to see her familiar face, but I feared to meet her glance. I crossed the street, outdistanced her as she slowly advanced, and then walked slowly to meet her. "How far away from me that seems!" I thought, "God preserve us, I cannot avoid her!" With her head bent slightly, as though in a revery, she came along. Her dark hair was as of yore combed far back from her forehead; the dainty lines of her mouth had the same expression of silent sorrow. Alas, how well I knew every line and feature of this kindly countenance, the soft cheeks, the great eyes, which were not fortunate when they looked upon me — and how far away that all lay! I could not go furtively by; little strength though I had, I stopped. Then she raised her gravely animate, dark eyes and gazed at me with the glance of a stranger; she did not recognize me, and passed on undisturbed. I groaned aloud and watched her as she went, shook my head in resignation to a power greater than I, and reeled along the way I was going.

But I did not reflect on this incomprehensible meeting; like the meeting with Mariandel, it was immediately blotted out of my consciousness, and I asked myself after Mara. Where was she? Where was she seeking me? What is she likely to be doing? I ran every which way and, seeking to escape her, I hoped to find her.

At last I felt fatigued and wanted a resting place, where in the stillness I could dream of her and, after the pitiful confusion of this foregathering, could try to understand

her and myself. I turned again toward the main street; I knew of a great restaurant there, in which there was a quiet palm room with marble walls and a fountain.

When I arrived in front of the building a gray-veiled figure was crouching on the steps. I stopped in dismay. With her hat pushed back behind her shoulders, she sat cowering forward. Her head, covered by her gray cloak, rested upon her right arm bent at the elbow; her right hand clasped the back of her neck and gleamed forth incredibly white and fine from under the dull folds and wrinkles of her garment; her left hand she stretched toward me beneath her right arm, in supplication. A beggar, it seemed, had collapsed here exhausted, and even in sleep did not forget her necessity. I stood still and thought: "Take her in your arms! Carry her away!" But that was not what her hand wanted.

"Do you beg for my heart?" I whispered to her. "I can put my heart into your heart, but not into your hand!" I hurried past her into the palm room and seated myself in the darkest corner.

Mara did not follow me.

I ordered a sherbet. But for the same reason that the restless running about in the noon-day glow had not heated me, the cool of the marble walls now made me shiver, and the sherbet gave me such an icy thrill that I hardly touched it. Nevertheless, I did not dare to go out again. I could not another time pass the figure on the steps. I sat there in agony, and against my will gazed into the little fountain, though the eternal tossing of its little ball and its splashing were a torture to me. So I was a captive. Had she come in, she would have seen me prostrate at her feet, and that was my sole desire.

Against what, then, was I struggling? Does one struggle against love? Is not that insanity?

When my time was up, I forced myself to arise, and stepped out, in deep shame and anxiety. She was no longer there. I stared in amazement at the spot where she had sat and hastened despairingly for home.

The evening passed and my work with it. The boys went to bed, Donna Leocadia disappeared in her quarters, her bolt snapped like a gun-shot into its socket, and I did not even smile. Voices could still be heard coming from the bedroom, and I did not call for silence.

I was as wide-awake as I had hardly been in the morning; to what end should I lie down to rest? After I had turned out the light, I seated myself in the large reading room — its windows and door opening on the courtyard had not been closed — on a little school bench, and abandoned myself to my thoughts.

Where was I? Was I sitting here, watching the first moonbeam glide across the floor? Was I roaming in the park? Was I loitering about the city? Was my heart beating within me, so gently? Was it not beating from some place far distant in the abyss of time? Was there not in my breast a yearning emptiness, a painfully anxious void? Oh — I had fancied that Mara was holding out her hand for my heart, and I must keep it: was it not in fact lying in the hollow of her hand, unsubstantial, a shade, a particle of dust? The wind may have blown it away and dissipated it.—

And where is she? Where must I now seek her, now that I cannot dream of her?

In a broad stream the moonlight came through the windows and drove the shadows of the table and chairs slowly and noiselessly through the room. Little mice darted out of the crevices and around in the light and the shadow under the table, looking for crumbs; their coats glistened often like soft silk, and their little eyes gleamed like black diamonds. They scampered helter-skelter, they squeaked, they sat upon their hind legs, and feasted merrily. Suddenly they scattered and disappeared. In from the courtyard came rushing a great rat with a great pattering of his claws on the floor; he dragged his tail behind him as though it were some lifeless thing. He went hither and thither, his greedy eyes shone like black glassy beads; finally he

crossed the threshold to the corridor, and remained sitting hard by, but invisible; only the naked tail lay like a piece of string across the threshold. I did not move. I looked away, and forgot the rat.

I stared at the moonlight on the floor, and my thought was always one and the same. I have never been so at my wits' end, so tortured with yearning, so wretched as at this time.

When I looked up again, Mara stood in the doorway, and fastened the splendor of her eyes upon me. I thought that all human discontent was purged out of me. I felt no further desire, so liberating was her appearance. If she had stayed there throughout the night, I should have remained steadfast in her sight.

Soon she glided on, stopped in the corner opposite to me, and contemplated me with her head strangely bowed. I did not understand her, and kept still. She came along the wall the whole length of the room; only the hem of her garment and the tips of her red shoes glistened in the moonlight. Now she stood before me, and looked down upon me. My eye avoided hers; for my will was trembling heavily as a rain drop that is about to fall to earth from the tip of a leaf. "O speak a word!" I thought fervently; "give me a sign, help me!" She remained silent. Then I plucked up courage, looked up at her, and endured her glance, and did not yield. Finally, she turned her eye away in sadness, shook her head, slowly turned around, and walked past the windows, now shrouded in the sheen of blue light, now gleaming out of the shade, and left the room.

For a considerable time I sat there in horror, stared vacantly into the air, and thought, "This is the end—the end!"

Then suddenly I felt my heart beat as hard and painfully as when a fist desperately beats upon a gate, and covers itself with bloody wounds thereby; I jumped up, and rushed after her. Like a shade she was already gliding through the street far in advance of me. I meant to follow her at

a certain distance; for at once the will to solve her riddle came back to me.

With no apparent end in view she walked through several streets, which were filled with the smoke of the nightly rubbish fires; then she turned out of the city in the direction of the park. I thought to myself, "She knows that you are following her, and will not give herself away." And that pleased me with a new sense of community with her.

I found the gate to the park, through which she had just passed, only half closed. I could not catch sight of her in the silvery twilight of the umbrageous garden. Hastily I ran across grass plots and flower beds to the fountain, which filled the air with the mighty noise of its waters, and heavily as silver splashed down into the black pool.

She was not here.

Oppressed with eagerness I circled the pool and searched at the erythrina. Here my footstep roused her; like a gray moth she fled to the bamboo alley, and through the nocturnal vault farther and farther away. I could not overtake her; and when we were once more in the bright moonlight, I sank exhausted by my mad hurry, and in despair I cried, "Mara!"

Then she paused, turned about, and, holding the palms of her hands at her breast, as though carrying something, she slowly drew near. Her eyes gleamed in soft pearly lustre, and rolled anxiously. When she stood before me I felt my strength sweetly restored to me; I kissed Mara's shadow in the grass and got up groaning. Then I saw something in her hands glowing like purple wine, and knew at once that it was my heart. I tried to seize it. She drew back and glided away from me.

"Give it me!" I cried in frightful need, "Give it me!"

But she fled. Then I snatched my dagger from its sheath, and with the last ounce of my strength hurled it after her; it whirred like a silver arrow through the moonlight and pierced her back. Seeing her fall, I myself plunged down; my senses left me.

fifties. They sit or lie at their ease in the warm greenness; they are silent, or carry on short, muttered conversations; they smoke short black pipes, and are continually spitting, with an air of contempt for the world, down the steep slope below them. The few workmen who pass by are sharply observed by them and critically placed; and each, according to the verdict, is greeted with a benevolent nod and "How are you, comrade?" or allowed to pass in disdainful silence.

A stranger who watched the old men lounging there, and inquired in the first street he came to about the odd collection of gray idlers, could learn from any child that they were known as the "Sun-Brothers." Many such strangers turned to look back once more at the weary group blinking in the sunlight, and wondered how they came to get such a lofty-sounding and poetical name. Some traveling enthusiasts felt a mysterious thrill at the name, and made out of the half-dozen gray loafers the surviving remnants of an almost extinct and very ancient community of worshippers of the orb of day. But the luminary after which the Sun-Brothers had been named had long ceased to shine in any sky; it was only the sign of a miserable tavern which had vanished several years before. Both sign and fame had disappeared, for the building served later as the city poorhouse, still harboring, indeed, numerous guests who had lived to see the setting of the sun taken down from the sign, and had acquired at its bar the reversion of their present shelter and guardianship.

The small house stood last in the steep lane and in the town, close to this sunny strip of turf. It offered a warped and weary front to the eye, as though it was a considerable effort to stand upright, and had nothing now about it to show how much merriment and cheerful clinking of glasses, joking and laughter it had seen, to say nothing of lively brawls and knife-play. Since the old pink paint of the front had grown pale and peeled off in cracked patches, the ancient abode of vagabonds corresponded accurately

HERMANN HESSE

in its external appearance to its purpose, which is not always the case with municipal buildings in our day. Plainly and honestly, even eloquently, it gave every one to understand that it was a refuge for those who had made shipwreck of their lives and been left behind in the race, the desperate end of a narrow backwater from which no plans or hidden resources could ever work them out again into the stream of life.

Fortunately, little of the melancholy of such reflections was to be found in the circle of the Sun-Brothers. Rather, they — most of them — went on living after the fashion of their bygone days, puffed up their petty bickerings and fancies and amusements, friendships and jealousies, to the dimensions of weighty events and affairs of state, and took not each other but themselves as seriously as possible. In fact, they behaved as if it was only now, since they had extricated themselves from the noisy streets of the bustling world, that the chase was beginning; they carried on their insignificant affairs with a gravity and a tenacity which for the most part they had never been able to attain in their earlier activities. Like many another small collection of men, although they were ruled on the principles of absolute monarchy by the head of the institution and treated as mere imaginary existences without rights, they believed themselves to be a small republic, in which every free citizen had the same title to rank and position as another and was firmly determined never to allow himself to be too little esteemed, even by a hair's breadth.

The Sun-Brothers had this too in common with other people, that they experienced the greater part of their destinies and satisfactions, their joys and sorrows, more in imagination than in tangible reality. A humorist might indeed have considered the difference between the life of these wrecks of humanity and that of busy citizens as consisting only in imagination, since both alike carried on their large and small affairs with the same busy gravity, and in the last resort an unfortunate inmate of the poorhouse

might possibly not be much worse off in God's eyes than many a great and honored personage. But without going as far as that, it might well be contended that for the easy-going observer of life these Sun-Brothers were no unworthy object of contemplation, since human life, even upon a small stage, always offers an amusing drama and one well worth consideration.

The nearer the time approaches when the present generation will have forgotten the name of the old "Sun" tavern and the Sun-Brothers, and its poor and outcast members will be cared for in other places, the more desirable it is that there should be a history of the old house and its inmates. As a contribution to such a chronicle, these pages will narrate something of the life of the first Sun-Brothers.

In the days when the present young men of Gerbersau were still wearing short breeches or even dresses, and when over the door of the present poorhouse there still swung proudly from the pink façade, at the length of a wrought-iron arm, the tin sun which was its ensign, one day late in autumn Karl Hürlin came back to his native town. He was the son of Hürlin the locksmith in the Senfgasse, who was long since dead. He was a little more than forty, and no one knew him any longer, since he had wandered away as a very young man and had never since been seen in the town. Now, however, he wore a good, neat suit of clothes, a moustache and well-trimmed hair, a silver watch-chain, a stiff hat and a high clean collar. He visited some of the former acquaintances of his family and a few old school friends, and bore himself in general as a man who had gone away and risen in the world, conscious of his value without over-emphasis. Then he went to the town hall, exhibited his papers, and declared that he intended to settle down in the place. After the necessary preliminaries had been accomplished, Herr Hürlin developed a busy and mysterious activity and correspondence, often took little journeys, and bought a piece of ground at the bottom of the valley.

He began to build there, on the site of an oil-works that had burned down, a new brick house, a stable and coach-house near it, and between the stable and the house a huge brick chimney. In the meantime he was seen now and then in the town taking his glass of an evening. At the beginning he was quiet and dignified, but after he had had a few glasses he would talk loud and emphatically, and made no secret of the fact that he had money enough to live a fine gentleman's life — but that one man was a thick-headed idler and another a genius and a man of business, that he belonged to the latter class and had no idea of sitting down to rest until he was able to write six ciphers after the figures that denoted his wealth.

Business people from whom he asked credit inquired into his history, and found out that up to that time he had never played an important part, but had been employed in various workshops and factories, rising finally to be a foreman. Lately, however, he had fallen into a tidy inheritance; and so people accorded him a certain measure of respect, and a few enterprising men put money also into his business. Soon, then, a moderately large and good-looking factory arose, in which Hürlin proposed to turn out certain rollers and other machinery required in the woolen industry.

Hardly was the place opened when its projector was sued by the same firm for which he had been overseer, on a charge of illegally representing as his own inventions and using some technical secrets which he had acquired there. He came out of the endless litigation without discredit but with heavy costs; he pushed his business with redoubled zeal, lowering his prices somewhat and flooding the country with advertisements. Orders were not lacking, the big chimney smoked night and day, and for a few years Hürlin and his factory flourished, and enjoyed respect and ample credit.

He had attained his ideal and fulfilled his old dream. It was true that in his earlier years he had made more than one attempt to acquire wealth, but it was the almost unex-

pected inheritance which had set him on his feet and enabled him to carry out his bold plans. Riches had not been his only aim; his warmest desires had all along tended toward the acquisition of a great and commanding position in the world. He would have been in his element as an Indian chief, as a privy councillor, or even as a master-huntsman; but the life of a factory-owner seemed to him both more comfortable and more independent. A cigar in the corner of his mouth and a grave and thoughtful smile upon his face, standing at the window or sitting at his desk to issue all sorts of orders, to sign contracts, to listen to suggestions and requests, to combine the wrinkled brow of the very busy man with an easy, comfortable manner, to be now unapproachably strict and now good-naturedly condescending, and at all times to feel that he was a leader of men and that much depended on him — this was his gift, which unfortunately had come only too late in life to full exercise. But now he had his desire to the full; he could do as he pleased, set people up or put them down, heave delightful sighs over the burden of wealth, and feel that he was envied by many. All this he enjoyed with a connoisseur's pleasure and with entire absorption; he wallowed in happiness, and felt that fate had at last given him the place that belonged to him.

In the meantime, the rival at whose expense he had grown great, made a new discovery, the introduction of which showed a number of the earlier products to be useless and turned out others much more cheaply. Since Hürlin, for all his self-confidence, was not a genius and understood only the externals of his trade, he descended at first slowly and then with increasing rapidity from his height of success, and finally reached a point where he was unable to conceal from himself that he was beaten. In desperation, he tried some daring financial expedients, through which he involved himself and a number of creditors with him in a complete and unsavory bankruptcy. He fled, but was caught and brought back, tried, and sent to jail; and when

after several years he appeared once more in the town it was as a discredited and broken man who could not hope to make a fresh start.

For a while he found humble occupations; but in the sultry days when the storm was gathering he had developed into a secret drinker — and what had then been concealed and little regarded became now a public scandal. Dismissed from a small clerk's place for untrustworthiness, he became an insurance agent, and in this capacity took to visiting all the taverns of the neighborhood. He lost this employment too, and, when an attempt to peddle matches and pencils from house to house also failed to produce an income, he sank to be a charge on the community. In these years he had become suddenly old and wretched; but from the days of his ruined splendor he had retained a certain provision of small arts and an external manner which helped him over some rough places and still produced their effect in the lower class of public-houses. He took with him to these places certain majestic and sweeping gestures and well-sounding habits of speech which had long corresponded to no inner reality, but on the strength of which he still enjoyed a standing among the good-for-nothings of the town.

At that time there was no poorhouse in Gerbersau; but people who were of no use to the community were maintained at a small provision from the town funds here and there in private families as lodgers. Here they were furnished with the absolute necessities of life and employed according to their capacity in small domestic labors. Since, however, all sorts of inconveniences arose from this system, and since no one at all was willing to receive the broken-down manufacturer, who enjoyed the hatred of the whole population, the community saw itself compelled to establish a special house as an asylum. And as at that particular moment the miserable old "Sun" tavern came under the hammer, the town acquired it and placed there as the first inmate, with a manager, Karl Hürlin. Others soon followed him; and they became known as the "Sun-Brothers."

Now Hürlin had long had close relations with the "Sun," since in the course of his decline he had frequented always lower and more wretched places, and finally had made his main headquarters there. He was expected among the daily visitors, and sat in the evenings at the same table with several boon companions who, when their time too came, were to follow him as despised paupers into the very same house. He was really glad to take up his abode there. In the days after the purchase of the property, when carpenters were busy transforming the old place to its new condition, he stood watching them from morning till night.

One mild, sunshiny morning he had arrived there as usual and taken up his position near the main door to watch the workmen at their task inside. One of the floors was broken and had to be relaid, the rickety stairs had to be patched up and provided with a firm balustrade, a couple of thin partitions put in. The town foreman was getting after the workmen, who were simulating great industry, and the school-children were wandering from room to room. All this activity delighted old Hürlin. He looked on with cheerful interest, pretending not to hear the malicious remarks of the workmen; he plunged his hands into the deep pockets of his greasy coat, and twisted his charity trousers, much too long and wide for him, into various spiral forms in which his legs looked like corkscrews. He pulled continually at a chipped clay pipe, which was not lit but still smelt of tobacco. His approaching entry into his new abode, from which he promised himself a new and fairer existence, filled the old drunkard with delighted curiosity and excitement.

While he was watching the laying of the new stairs and silently estimating the quality and probable durability of the thin pine boards, he suddenly felt himself pushed to one side. As he turned in the direction of the street, he saw a workman with a large step-ladder which with great care and many props he was attempting to set up on the sloping surface of the street. Hürlin betook himself to the oppo-

site side of the street, leaned against a stone, and followed the activity of the workman with great attention. The latter had now set up his ladder and made it secure; he climbed it and began to scratch about in the mortar over the main door with a view of taking down the old sign. His efforts filled the ex-manufacturer with interest and also with pain, as he thought of the bygone days, of the many glasses of wine or spirits he had drunk under the now disappearing sign, and of the past in general. He took no little joy in observing that the iron arm was so firmly fixed in the wall that the workman had much trouble in getting it loose. Under the poor old sign there had been so many infernally good times! When the workman began to swear, the old man smiled; when he pulled and pushed and twisted and knocked, when he began to sweat and almost fell off the ladder, the spectator felt no little satisfaction. Finally he went away, and came back in a quarter of an hour with an iron-saw. Hürlin perceived that now it was all over with the venerable ensign. The saw bit shriekingly into the good iron; after a few moments the arm began to droop, and finally fell with a rattle and a clang on the pavement.

Hürlin crossed the street. "I say, Mr. Workman," he begged humbly, "give me the thing; it's of no value now."

"Why? Who are you?" asked the fellow.

"I'm of the same religion," answered Hürlin entreatingly—"my father was a locksmith too, and I've been one in my time. Give it me, won't you?"

The workman picked up the sign and looked at it. "The arm is still good," he decided. "For its time it was not a bad piece of work. But if you want the tin thing, that's no use to anybody . . ."

He tore away the green tin wreath in which, with long since dimmed and lumpy rays about it, the golden sun had hung, and gave it to him. The old man thanked him and made off with his prize, to hide it in the elder-bushes further up with a strange greed and pleasure in the thought of contemplating it. So, after a lost battle, a paladin might

have hidden the insignia of fallen royalty, to preserve them for other days and new glories. When he returned, to recommence his inspection of the carpenters' work, the house struck him as changed and desolate because the sun was gone, and in its place over the door there was nothing but an ugly hole in the plaster.

A few days later, without much pomp or ceremony, the opening of the scantily-furnished poorhouse took place. A few beds had been put up; the rest of the furniture was the product of the tavern-keeper's sale, except that a supporter of the scheme had decorated each of the three bedrooms with a Bible text surrounded by wreaths of flowers painted on cardboard. For the position of manager, when it was put up to competition, there had not been many applicants; and the choice had fallen upon Herr Andreas Sauberle, a widowed weaver of good repute, who brought his loom with him and continued to work at his trade — the position was not very remunerative, and he had no desire to become a Sun-Brother himself in his old age.

When old Hürlin had his room assigned to him, he at once began a minute examination of it. He found a window looking on the small courtyard, two doors, a bed, a chest, two chairs, a jar, a broom and duster; further, a shelf in the corner covered with oilcloth, on which stood a glass, a tin basin, a clothesbrush and a New Testament. He felt the stout bedclothes, tried the brush on his hat, held up glass and basin critically to the light, sat down experimentally on both the chairs, and decided that all was satisfactory and in order. Only the impressive text on the wall failed to meet with his approval. He contemplated it for awhile with a scornful expression, read the words, "Little children, love one another," and shook his bushy head discontentedly. Then he pulled the thing down, and with great care hung the old "Sun" sign in its place — the only piece of property he had brought with him to his new dwelling. But just as he did so the manager came in, and ordered him in a tone of rebuke to put back the text. He

was going to take the tin sun with him to throw it away, but Karl Hürlin clung to it desperately, insisting with loud outcries on his rights of property, and finally hid the trophy, still growling, under his bed.

The life that began on the following day did not quite correspond to his expectations and at first did not please him at all. He was obliged to rise at seven and go to get his coffee in the weaver's quarters, then make his bed, clean his wash-basin, polish his boots, and generally tidy up the room. At ten o'clock there was a piece of black bread for him, after which began the forced labor which he dreaded. A huge pile of wood had been dumped in the yard, which was all to be sawed and split.

As winter was still a long way off, Hürlin did not hurry himself with the wood. Slowly and carefully he laid a log in position, then he adjusted it with great accuracy, and considered awhile where he should begin to saw it, whether in the middle or on the right or the left. Then he applied the saw with the same care, laid it aside once more, spat on his hands and picked it up again. Now he took three or four strokes, cutting half an inch into the wood, but then drew the saw out again and examined it minutely, turned the screw, set it a little sharper, held it up and blinked at it for awhile, then heaved a deep sigh and rested for a time. Presently he began again and sawed a few inches into the wood; but he grew unbearably warm and stopped to take off his coat. This process he performed slowly and with reflection, and then looked about some time for a clean and safe place to put it. When it was properly bestowed, he began to saw once more — but not for long; the sun had come up over the roof, and shone directly in his face. This necessitated moving the log and the trestle and the saw, each separately, to another place where he could be in the shade. This exertion brought out the perspiration, and he was obliged to look for his handkerchief to wipe his forehead. It was not in his trousers pocket; he remembered having it in his coat, and so he strolled over to where he

had put the coat, spread it out carefully, sought and found the colored handkerchief, wiped off the sweat, blew his nose, put the handkerchief away, folded the coat with great attention, and returned to his saw-horse much refreshed. Here he came to the conclusion that he had perhaps set the saw at too sharp an angle, and so he performed a new operation upon it which took some time, and finally, with much grunting, achieved the complete division of the log into two pieces. By this time the midday bells were ringing from the church-tower, so he quickly got into his coat, put the saw away, and went into the house to dinner.

"You're punctual, I'm bound to say that for you," remarked the weaver. The woman brought in the soup, after which there was some cabbage with a slice of bacon, and Hürlin fell to with a will.

After dinner the sawing was supposed to continue, but this he declined with emphasis. "I'm not accustomed to it," he said in an injured tone, and stuck to it. "I'm tired out, and must have a little rest."

The weaver shrugged his shoulders and said "Do as you like — but a man that won't work must'nt expect any supper. At four o'clock there'll be bread and cider, if you've done your sawing — otherwise nothing more till the soup at night."

Bread and cider, thought Hürlin, and was confronted with a very serious problem. In the end he went out and picked up the saw again; but he shuddered at the thought of working in the hot midday hours, and he let the wood lie where it was. He went out in the street, found a cigar-stump on the pavement, put it in his mouth, and slowly covered the fifty paces to the bend in the road. There he stopped to take breath, sat down by the roadside on the fine warm turf, looked out over the many roofs and down to the market-place, catching a glimpse at the bottom of the valley of his old factory, and dedicated this place as the first of the Sun-Brothers — the place to which afterward so many of his comrades and successors have come to

A HUMAN LOAD

FRANZ WILHELM VOGDT

lounge away their summer afternoons, and often mornings and evenings as well.

The gentle, beneficent contemplation of an old age free from cares and troubles, which he had promised himself in the poorhouse, and which that morning had faded under the pressure of hard work like a fair mirage, now returned gradually to him. His heart soothed by the feeling of a pensioner assured for the rest of his days from anxiety, hunger, and homelessness, he sat at his ease on the turf, feeling the pleasing warmth of the sun on his withered skin. He gazed over the scene of his former activities and misfortunes, and waited without impatience till some one should come who would give him a light for his cigar-stump. Shrill hammering from a workshop, the distant ring of the anvil in a smithy, the low rumbling of a far-away wagon came up to his heights with a little dust from the road and thin smoke from chimneys of all sizes, to show him that down in the town people were bravely toiling and sweating, while Karl Hürlin sat peacefully untroubled on his throne at a dignified distance from it all.

About four o'clock he came quietly into the room of the weaver, who was moving his shuttle regularly back and forth. He waited a while to see if there might not, after all, be some bread and cider, but the weaver only laughed at him and sent him away. He returned disappointed to his post of observation, growling to himself; there he put in an hour or more in a sort of half sleep, and then watched the coming of evening to the narrow valley. It was still warm and comfortable up there, but his cheerful mood departed little by little; in spite of his slackness, he began to get horribly bored doing nothing, and his thoughts returned incessantly to the snack that he had missed. He saw a tall glass full of cider standing in front of him, yellow and sparkling and perfumed with sweet herbs. He imagined how he would have taken it up, the cool round glass, and gulped down a good draught at the first, drinking then more sparingly. He gave an angry sigh as often

as he woke from the delightful dream; and his anger went out against the pitiless manager, the weaver, the miserable skinflint, the little stumpy fellow, the oppressor, the seller of his soul, the poisonous Jew. After he had fumed enough at the manager, he began to be sorry for himself and fell into a tearful mood; but finally he made a resolution to work the next day.

He did not see how the valley grew paler and filled with soft shadows, and how the clouds took on a rosy tint; he was blind to the mild, sweet evening colors of the sky and the mysterious blue that came over the distant mountains. He saw nothing but that lost glass of cider, the toil that waited inevitably for him on the morrow, and the hardness of his lot. Those were the kind of thoughts he had been used to having when he had passed a day without getting anything to drink. What it would be like to have a glass of something stronger than cider was a thing he did not even dare to think about.

Stooping and languid, he made his way down to the house at supper-time, and took his seat ill-humoredly at the table. There was soup, bread, and onions, and he ate grimly as long as there was anything on his plate; but there was nothing to drink. After the meal he sat still disconsolately and did not know what to be at. Nothing to drink, nothing to smoke, no one to gossip with! For the weaver was working busily by lamplight, paying no attention to him.

Hürlin sat for a half hour at the empty table, listening to the click of Sauberle's machine and staring at the yellow flame of the hanging lamp, until he sank into an abyss of discontent, self-pity, envy, hatred and malice from which he neither sought nor found any way of escape. At last his silent anger and hopelessness grew too much for him. He raised his fist and brought it down on the table with a bang, rolling out a good German oath.

"Here!" said the weaver, coming over to him. "What's the matter with you? No cursing allowed where I am."

"Well, what in the devil's name am I to do?"

"Oh, you find the evening long? Then go to bed."

"There you are again! People send little children to bed at a certain time—not me!"

"Then I'll get a little work for you."

"Work? You're too free with your tyranny, you old slave-driver!"

"Come, keep cool! But there—there's something for you to read." He put out a couple of volumes from the thinly-furnished shelves that hung on the wall, and went back to his work. Hürlin had no inclination to read, but he took one of the books in his hand and opened it. It was an almanac, and he began to look at the pictures. The first was a fantastically dressed ideal woman's figure depicted as an ornament for the title-page, with bare feet and flowing locks. Hürlin remembered that he had a stump of lead-pencil in his pocket. He took it out, wet it in his mouth, and drew two large round breasts on the woman's bodice, which he continued to emphasize, wetting his pencil again and again, until the paper was almost worn through. Then he turned the page and saw with satisfaction that the impress of his artistic design had gone through several other pages. The next picture on which he came illustrated a fairy-story, and represented a kobold or some malicious spirit with evil eyes, a fierce moustache and a huge open mouth. Eagerly the old man wet his pencil again, and wrote under the monster, in large, legible letters, "This is Weaver Sauberle, the manager."

He was proposing to go through the whole book and deface and defile it all. But the next picture arrested his attention, and he forgot himself in studying it. It represented the explosion of a factory, and consisted of little beyond a huge mass of smoke and fire, around and above which whole or fragmentary human bodies, bricks, plaster, laths, and beams were flying through the air. This interested him, and led him into trying to reconstruct the whole story, and especially to imagine how the victims must have

felt at the moment of being hurled into the air. There was a charm and a satisfaction in this for him which held him intent on the picture a long time; with all his egoism, he belonged to the numerous class who find more to think about in other people's fate, especially when it is strikingly illustrated, than in their own.

When he had exercised his imagination sufficiently on this exciting picture, he went on turning over the pages, and presently came to another that arrested him, though in quite a different way. It was a bright and cheerful picture — a pretty arbor, on the outer boughs of which hung a star for a sign. On the star sat, with ruffled neck and open beak, a little bird singing. Inside the arbor was to be seen, about a rough rustic table, a small group of young men, students or roving journeymen, who chatted and drank a good wine out of cheerful-looking bottles. To one side of the picture was visible a ruined castle raising its towers to heaven, and in the background a fair landscape stretched away, as it might have been the Rhine valley, with a river and boats and distant hills. The revellers were all handsome youths, merry and amiable lads, smooth-faced or with light youthful beards, who were evidently singing over their wine the praises of friendship and love, of the good old Rhine and of God's blue heaven.

At first this engraving reminded the morose and lonely man who looked at it of his own better days, when he, too, could call for a bottle of wine, and of the many glasses of good sound stuff which he had consumed. But by degrees the conviction stole over him that he had never been as happy and gay as these young revellers, even long ago in his light-hearted years of wandering, when he had taken the road as a journeyman-locksmith. The summer gladness in the arbor, the bright, good-humored faces of the young people made him sad and angry. He wondered whether it was all the invention of a painter, idealized and false, or whether there were in reality somewhere such arbors and such merry, carefree youths. Their smiling

faces filled him with an envious longing; the more he looked at the picture, the more he felt as though he were looking for a moment through a small window into another world, into a fairer country and the life of freer and more gracious men than he had ever met in his life. He did not know into what strange kingdom he was gazing, nor that his feelings were those of people who read poetry, and get their pleasure in the beauty of the description from the reflection how much smaller and meaner the every-day reality is, passing into a slight, sweet sadness and longing. He did not well understand how to extract the sweetness from this kind of sadness, and so he shut the book, threw it angrily on the table, muttered a forced "Good night," and went up to his room, where the moonlight lay on bed and floor and chest and was reflected in the filled wash-basin. The deep stillness, early as the hour was, the peaceful moonlight, and the emptiness of the room, almost too large for a mere sleeping-chamber, awoke in the rough old fellow a feeling of unbearable loneliness, from which he escaped only after many muttered curses and some time later into the land of slumber.

There followed days in which he sawed wood and enjoyed his afternoon refreshment, alternating with days in which he was idle and did without it. He often sat up there by the roadside, full of poisonous, malicious thoughts, spitting down toward the town with all the bitterness of his unrestrained heart. The feeling he had hoped for, of being at peace in a safe haven, failed to visit him; instead, he felt himself sold and betrayed, and either made violent scenes with the weaver or brooded secretly in his own heart on the feeling of defeat and disgust and ennui.

Meanwhile the term for which board had been paid for one of the pensioners in private houses expired, and one day there came to the "Sun" as a second guest, the former sailmaker, Lukas Heller.

While business reverses had made a drinker out of Hürlin, it was just the opposite with Heller. Nor had he,

like the manufacturer, fallen suddenly from the height of showy riches; he had gone down slowly and steadily, with the necessary pauses and interludes, from an uncommon workman to a common vagabond. His good and energetic wife had been unable to save him; rather, the hopeless struggle had been too much for her, though she seemed much stronger than he, and she had died — while her good-for-nothing husband enjoyed rude health, played the fool for a few more years, and then, after he was ruined and dependent, went lazily on with no apparent diminution of strength toward a ripe old age. Of course his conviction was that he had had bad luck with his wife as well as with the sail-making business, and that his gifts and performances had merited a better fate.

Hürlin had awaited this man's arrival with great eagerness, for he was growing daily more utterly weary of being alone. But when Heller appeared, the ex-manufacturer stood on his dignity and would scarcely have anything to do with him. He even grumbled because Heller's bed was put in the same room with his, although he was secretly glad of it.

After supper, since his comrade seemed disposed to be so grumpy, the sailmaker took a book and began to read. Hürlin sat opposite him and threw occasional glances of suspicious observation at him. Once, when the reader could not help laughing at something amusing, the other was very much tempted to ask him what it was. But as Heller looked up from his book at the same moment, evidently willing to communicate the joke, Hürlin assumed a gloomy expression and pretended to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of a fly that was crawling across the table.

So they sat the whole evening through. One read, looking up occasionally as if ready for a chat, the other watched him incessantly, only turning his eyes away haughtily when his companion happened to raise his. The manager worked away busily until late. Hürlin's face grew more and more

sour and hostile, although he was really pleased to think he would no longer be alone in his bedroom. When ten o'clock struck, the manager spoke: "Now you might as well be going to bed, you two." Both rose and went upstairs.

While they were slowly and stiffly undressing in the dimly-lighted room, Hürlin thought the time had come to enter on an inquiry into the qualities of the companion in misfortune whom he had so long desired.

"Well, there's two of us now," he remarked, throwing his waistcoat on a chair.

"Yes," said Heller.

"It's a pig-sty, this," the other went on.

"Oh—is it?"

"*Is* it? I ought to know! But now there'll be a little life in it—yes."

"Say," asked Heller, "do you take your shirt off at night or keep it on?"

"In summer I take it off."

So Heller took his shirt off too, and lay down in the creaking bed. Soon he began to snore loudly. But Hürlin's curiosity was not yet exhausted. "Are you asleep, Heller?"

"No."

"There's plenty of time. . . . Tell me, you're a sail-maker, aren't you?"

"I was—a master sailmaker."

"And now—?"

"And now—you must think a lot of me, to ask such silly questions."

"Oh, you needn't be so snippy! You old fool, you may have been a master sailmaker, but that's not so much. I was a manufacturer—I owned a factory, do you understand?"

"You needn't shout at me—I knew that before. And after that, what did you manufacture?"

"What do you mean, after that?"

"You know what I mean — in jail."

Hürlin emitted a bleating laugh. "Oh, I suppose you're one of the pious kind — a psalm-singer, eh?"

"I? That's the last thing! No, I'm not pious — but at the same time I've never been in jail."

"You wouldn't have been at home there. Most of the people there are fine fellows."

"O Lord! Fine fellows of your sort? You're right — I shouldn't have liked it."

"Some people have got to talk, whether they know what they're talking about or not."

"Just what I was thinking."

"Oh, come now, be a good fellow! What made you give up the sailmaking?"

"Oh, don't bother me! The business was all right, but the devil got into it somehow. It was my wife's fault."

"Your wife? Did she drink?"

"That would have been too much. No, I did all the drinking that was done, as is mostly the case, not the wife. But it was her fault just the same."

"Was it? What did she do?"

"Don't ask so many questions!"

"Have you got any childen?"

"One boy — in America."

"Sensible fellow — a man's better off there."

"You'd think so — but he's always writing for money, the rascal! He's married, too. When he went away, I said to him, 'Friedel,' I said, 'good luck to you, and take care of yourself; do whatever you like — but if you marry, there'll be trouble.' Well, now he's got himself into it. Say, were you ever married?"

"No — but you see man can get into trouble even without a wife — don't you think so?"

"That's according to the man. I'd have my own shop today, if it hadn't been for my fool of a wife."

"H'm —!"

"Did you say anything?"

Hürlin was silent, and pretended to be asleep. He had a premonition that if the sailmaker ever got fairly started on the subject of his wife, there would be no end to it.

"Go to sleep, then, stupid!" cried Heller; the other did not allow himself to be drawn, but went on deliberately taking long breaths, until he really fell asleep.

Next morning the sailmaker, who at sixty did not need so much sleep, was the first to wake. He lay for half an hour staring at the white ceiling. Then, although he had seemed so stiff in his movements the day before, he got out of bed as lightly and gently as a morning breeze, stole over in his bare feet to Hürlin's bed without making a sound, and began to explore the latter's clothes. He searched carefully through them, but found nothing except the stump of a pencil in the waistcoat pocket, which he took out and appropriated. A hole which he discovered in the left stocking of his companion he enlarged with the help of his two thumbs until it was of considerable size. Then he crept quietly back to his warm bed and did not move again until Hürlin was awake and up and had thrown a few drops of water in his face. Then he sprang up nimbly and got into his trousers. He did not, however, hasten to finish his toilette, and when the ex-manufacturer advised him to hurry, he said "Oh, you go on down — I'll be after you in a minute." Hürlin did so, and Heller heaved a sigh of relief. He seized the washbasin and emptied the clean water out of the window — for he had a horror of washing. When he had avoided this distasteful process, he was soon ready to hasten down and get his coffee.

The making of the beds, tidying up the room, and polishing of shoes was attended to after breakfast, of course without undue haste and with plenty of pauses for conversation. The manufacturer found it all much more sociable and pleasant in company than alone; he began to have very friendly feelings toward his housemate, and to congratulate himself on the prospect of a lively and cheerful existence. Even the inevitable work seemed less terrifying than usual,

and at the manager's summons he went down to the yard with Heller, not indeed swiftly but with an almost smiling countenance.

In spite of passionate outbursts on the part of the weaver and his constant endeavors to conquer the reluctance of his charge, in the last few weeks the wood-pile had shown very little alteration. It seemed almost as high and wide as ever — as though it had the blessed permanence of the widow's cruse of oil; and the little heap of sawed bits lying in a corner, barely a couple of dozen, looked like the result of a child's play, begun in a whim and as lightly thrown aside.

Now both the old men were to work at it. It was necessary to arrange for a combination, since there was only one saw-horse and one saw. After a few preparatory motions, sighs, and remarks, they conquered their inner reluctance and addressed themselves to their task. And now, unfortunately, Karl Hürlin's glad hopes showed themselves to have been idle dreams, for the manner of working of the two displayed the essential difference between them.

Each had his own special way of being busy. In both, alongside of the innate overmastering laziness, a remnant of conscience exhorted timidly to work; neither of them really wanted to work, but they wanted to be able to pretend to themselves at least that they were of some use in the world. They strove to attain this result in different ways; and in these two worn-out and useless fellows, whom fate had apparently destined to be brothers, there appeared an unexpected divergence of aptitudes and inclinations.

Hürlin was master of a method by which, though he did next to nothing, he was or seemed continually busy. The simple act of taking hold of a thing had come with him to be a highly developed manœuvre, owing to the way in which he associated with this small action a noticeable *ritardando*. Moreover, he invented and employed, between two simple motions, as between the grasping and applying

the saw, a whole series of useless but easy intervening details, and was always concerned in keeping actual work as far as possible from contact with his body by such unnecessary trivialities. Thus he resembled a condemned criminal who devises this and that and the other thing that must be done and cared for and attended to before he goes to suffer the inevitable penalty. And so he contrived to fill the required hours with an incessant activity and to bring to them a pretence of honest toil, without having really accomplished anything that could be called work.

In this characteristic and practical system he had hoped to be understood and supported by Heller, and now found himself disappointed. The sailmaker, in accordance with his inner character, followed an entirely opposite method. He worked himself up by a convulsive decision into a foaming fury, rushed at his work as though he did not care for life, and raged at it until the sweat flowed and the splinters flew. But this only lasted a few minutes; then he was exhausted — but he had appeased his conscience, and rested in motionless collapse until after a certain time the fury came upon him once more, and again he raged and steamed at his task. The results of this fashion of working did not notably surpass those of the manufacturer's.

Under these circumstances each was bound to be an offence and a hindrance to the other. The hasty and violent method of Heller, beginning at the wrong end, revolted the deepest feelings of the manufacturer, while his steady sluggish appearance of doing something was just as abhorrent to the sailmaker. When the latter fell into one of his furious attacks on the job, Hürlin stepped back a few paces as if alarmed and looked on scornfully as his comrade puffed and panted, retaining, however, just enough breath to reproach Hürlin for his laziness.

"Look at him," he would cry, "look at him, the good-for-nothing loafer! You like that, don't you? to see other people doing your work! Oh yes, the gentleman is a manufacturer. I believe you've been quite capable of sawing away four weeks on the same log!"

Neither the offensiveness nor the truth of these reproaches stirred Hürlin up very much; but he did not let Heller get the better of him. As soon as the sailmaker, wearied out, stopped to rest, he gave him back his accusations, finding a choice variety of ingenious terms of abuse to describe him, and threatening to hammer on his thick head until he should be in condition to mistake the world for a dish of mashed potatoes and the twelve apostles for a band of robbers. It never came, of course, to the execution of these threats; they were merely rhetorical exercises, and neither of the adversaries regarded them in any other light. Now and then they brought charges against each other before the manager; but Sauberle was wise enough to decline to interfere. "You fellows," he said crossly, "are not school-children any longer. I'm not going to mix myself up with such squabbles — and there's an end of it!"

In spite of this, both of them came again, each for himself, to complain to him. Thereupon one day the manufacturer got no meat for his dinner; and when he defiantly asked for it, the weaver said merely "Don't get so excited, Hürlin; there must be penalties now and then. Heller has told me what you've been saying to him again this morning." The sailmaker was not a little triumphant over this unexpected victory; but at supper the thing was reversed — Heller got no soup; and the two sly dogs realized that they were beaten at their own game. From that time on there was no more tale-bearing.

But between themselves they gave each other no peace. Only now and then, when they crouched side by side on the turf by the roadside and stretched their wrinkled necks to look after the passers by, a temporary soul-brotherhood grew up between them, as they discussed the ways of the world, the weaver, the system of caring for the poor, and the wretchedly thin coffee in their abode, or exchanged their slender stock of ideas — which with the sailmaker consisted in a conclusive psychology of women, with Hürlin

in recollections of his travels and fantastic plans for financial speculations on a grand scale.

"You see, when a fellow gets married—" that was how Heller always began. And Hürlin, when it was his turn, opened with "If I knew anybody who would lend me a thousand marks," or "Once upon a time, when I was down at Solingen." He had worked there for three months many years ago; but it was remarkable how many things had happened to him or come under his notice in Solingen.

When they had talked themselves out, they sucked silently at their usually empty pipes, folded their arms about their thin knees, spat at irregular intervals on the road, and stared past the gnarled old apple-trees down into the town whose outcasts they were, and whom in their folly they held responsible for their misfortunes. Then they became gloomy, sighed, made discouraged gestures with their hands, and realized that they were old and played out. This always lasted until their dejection changed again into malice, which generally took half an hour. Then, as a rule, it was Lukas Heller who opened the ball, at first with some little teasing remark.

"Just look down there!" he would cry, pointing toward the valley.

"What is it?" growled the other.

"You don't need to ask—I know what I see."

"Well, what *do* you see, in the devil's name?"

"I see the cylinder-factory that used to be Hürlin & Schwindelmeier, now Dallas & Co. Rich men they are, I'm told—rich men!"

"Oh, go to the deuce!" growled Hürlin.

"Thank you!"

"Do you want to make me out a swindler?"

"No need to make you one!"

"You dirty old sail-cobbler!"

"Jail-bird!"

"You're an old drunkard!"

"Drunkard yourself! *You've* got no call to abuse decent people!"

"I'll knock in half a dozen of your teeth!"

"And I'll make you walk lame, my fine fellow. Bankrupt!"

Then the fight was on. After exhausting all the terms of abuse usual in the locality, the imagination of both rascals would invent new ones of the most audacious sort, until this capital too was used up, and the two fighting-cocks would totter back to the house, exhausted and embittered.

Neither had any dearer wish than to get the better of the other and make him feel his superiority; but if Hürlin had the better brain, the sailmaker was the more cunning — and since the weaver took no side, neither could claim a real triumph over the other. Both longed ardently to attain a position of superior consideration in the house; and they employed for this purpose so much energy, caution, thought, and secret obstinacy that with the half of these either of them, if he had put it to use at the right time, might have kept his bark afloat instead of becoming a Sun-Brother.

In the meantime the huge pile of wood in the yard had slowly become smaller. What remained had been left for another time, and other employments had been taken up. Heller sometimes worked by the day in the mayor's garden, and Hürlin was occupied under the manager's supervision in washing salad, picking lentils, shelling beans and the like — tasks in which he was not required to overexert himself, and yet could feel he was being useful. Under these conditions the feud between the two brethren seemed slowly healing, since they never worked together the whole day, and in their leisure hours each had enough to complain of and to report. Each of them imagined, too, that he had been selected for this particular work on account of special aptitudes which gave him a certain superiority over the other. So the summer drew along, until the leaves began to turn brown, and the evenings on which one could do without a light until nine o'clock were no more.

At this time it happened to the manufacturer, as he was sitting alone on the doorstep one afternoon and sleepily contemplating the world, to see a strange young man come down the hill who asked the way to the town hall. Hürlin was civil out of sheer boredom, went a couple of streets with the stranger, answered his questions, and was presented for his trouble with two cigars. He asked the next wagon-driver for a light, lit one of them, and returned to his shady place on the doorstep, where with enthusiastic delight he gave himself up to the pleasure, long unknown, of smoking a good cigar. The last of it he put into his pipe and smoked it until there was nothing left but ashes and a few brown drops. In the evening, when the sailmaker came from the mayor's garden, with, as usual, plenty to relate about the pear-cider and white bread and radishes he had had for his lunch, and how splendidly they had treated him, Hürlin also recounted his adventure with long-winded eloquence, to Heller's great envy.

"And what have you done with the cigars?" he asked at once with interest.

"Smoked them," said Hürlin, haughtily.

"Both?"

"Yes, you old simpleton, both."

"Both at once?"

"No, you fool, first one and then the other."

"Is that true?"

"Why shouldn't it be true?"

"Well," said the sailmaker, who did not believe the story, quickly, "then I'll tell you something. You're a dumb ox, and a big one at that."

"Am I? And why?"

"If you'd put one by, you'd have had something for tomorrow. Now what have you got?"

This was too much for the manufacturer. With a grin he drew the remaining cigar from his breast-pocket and held it before the eyes of the envious sailmaker, in order to annoy him. "Do you see that? There—I'm not such a God-forsaken idiot as you think I am!"

"Oh, so you've still got one left! Let me look at it."

"Hold on! I don't know—"

"Oh, just to look at it. I'm a judge of whether it's a good one. You'll get it back right away." So Hürlin gave him the cigar. He turned it about in his fingers, held it to his nose and sniffed at it awhile, and said, as he reluctantly gave it back, "There you are—it's miserable cabbage-leaf, the kind you get two for a kreuzer."

Then there arose a discussion as to the goodness and the price of the cigar, which lasted until they went to bed. When they were undressing, Hürlin laid his treasure on his pillow and watched it anxiously. Heller mocked him: "Yes, take it to bed with you! Perhaps it'll have little ones." The manufacturer made no reply; when his companion was in bed, he put the cigar carefully on the window-sill and went to bed too. He stretched himself luxuriously, and before he went to sleep still savored the enjoyment of the afternoon, when he had so proudly blown his smoke out into the sunshine, and when with the fragrance something of his former splendor and consciousness of greatness had returned to him. Just so in the old days, between his office and his workshop, he had pulled at his long cigar and sent up careless, lordly, captain-of-industry clouds. Then he went to sleep, and while his dreams conjured up the picture of his vanished greatness in all its glory, he stuck up his red and swollen nose into the air with the same proud contempt of the world as in his best days.

In the middle of the night, however, contrary to his custom, he suddenly woke up, and there he saw in the dim light the sailmaker standing at the head of his bed, with a thin hand stretched out toward the cigar on the window-sill.

With a cry of rage he threw himself out of bed and barred the retreat of the malefactor. For a while no words were spoken; the two enemies stood facing each other, breathing hard but not moving, surveying each other with piercing glances of anger, uncertain themselves whether it was fear or excess of surprise that prevented them from having each other by the hair.

"Drop that cigar!" cried Hürlin at last, hoarsely. The sailmaker did not alter his position. "Drop it!" shouted the other, and as Heller still did not move, he hauled off and would undoubtedly have given him a swinging blow if the sailmaker had not ducked in time. In the movement, however, he dropped the cigar, Hürlin tried to grasp it, Heller trod on it with his heel, and with a light crackle it went to pieces. Then the manufacturer gave him a good one in the ribs, and the next thing a fair tussle was on. It was the first time they had come to blows; but their cowardice outweighed even their anger, and no serious damage resulted. Now one advanced a step, now the other; the two naked old men circled about the room without much noise as if they were performing some antique dance, each a hero and neither receiving a blow. This went on until in a favorable moment the manufacturer got his hand on his empty wash-basin. He swung it wildly over his head and brought it down forcibly on the skull of his unarmed foe. It did him no particular harm, but the crash of the tin basin gave out a warlike and resonant sound that rang through the whole house. At once the door opened, admitting the manager in his nightshirt, who stood between scolding and laughing before the duelists.

"You're a pair of precious old rascals," he cried, "knocking each other about without a stitch on you, like a couple of old he-goats! Into bed with you — and if I hear another sound, you'll get something to be thankful for!"

"But he was stealing —" Hürlin began to shout, almost crying with rage and injured dignity, only to be instantly interrupted and ordered to keep quiet. The he-goats retreated muttering to their beds; the weaver listened a few moments at the door, and when he had gone all was still in the room. By the wash-basin the fragments of the cigar lay on the floor; the pale summer night peeped in at the window, and over the two old rogues in their deadly hatred hung the flower-bedecked text, "Little children, love one another."

Hürlin extracted at least a minor triumph out of the affair the next day. He steadfastly refused any longer to share the same room with the sailmaker; and after a stubborn resistance the weaver was obliged to give in and assign Heller another room. So the manufacturer once more became a hermit; and glad as he was to be rid of the sailmaker's company, it preyed on his spirits to such an extent that he realized fully for the first time into what a hopeless *cul de sac* fate had thrust him in his old age.

The poor old man could make no cheerful prognostications. Formerly, however badly things went, he had at least been free; even in his most miserable days he had had a few pennies to spend at the tavern, and could set out on his wanderings again whenever he chose. Now he sat there, stripped of all rights and under discipline, never saw a copper that he could call his own, and had nothing before him in the world except to become older and feebler and, when his time came, to lie down and die.

He began to do what he had never done before — to look up and down from a high point of vantage on the Allpach road, over the town and along the valley; to measure the white high-roads with his eye, and watch the soaring birds and the clouds; to follow longingly with his eye the passing wagons and the pedestrians that went up and down, as a mourning exile from their company, left behind never to join them in their journeys. To pass the evenings, he accustomed himself now to reading; but from the edifying histories of the almanacs and pious periodicals he often raised a distant and depressed eye, feeling that he had nothing in common with such people and events, recalling his young days, Solingen, his factory, the prison, the joyous evenings in the old "Sun," and coming back always to the thought that now he was alone, hopelessly alone.

Heller, the sailmaker, cast sidelong and malicious glances at him, but after a time attempted to reëstablish intercourse with him. When he met the manufacturer out at their resting-place, he would occasionally put on a friendly ex-

pression and greet him with "Fine weather, Hürlin! I think we shall have a good autumn, don't you?" But Hürlin merely looked at him, nodded wearily, and made no sound.

In spite of all this, some thread would have gradually spun itself to link the two perverse creatures together; out of his very melancholy and disgust, Hürlin would have grasped as for dear life at the first comer, if only to get rid now and then of the wretched feeling of loneliness and emptiness. The manager, who was displeased by the manufacturer's silent moroseness, did what he could also to bring his two charges together. But finally a sort of salvation, if a dubious one, came to all three. During the month of September there came to the house at short intervals two new inmates — two very different ones.

One was called Louis Kellerhals; but this name was not known to anybody in the town, for Louis had borne for decades the appellation of Holdria, whose origin is undiscoverable. When, many years before, he had become a pensioner of the community, he had been placed with a friendly artisan, where he had been well treated and counted as a member of the family. The artisan had now, however, died with unexpected suddenness; and since his protégé could hardly be reckoned as part of the inheritance he left, it was necessary for the poorhouse to receive him. He made his entrance with a well-filled linen bag, a huge blue umbrella, and a green wooden cage, containing a very fat common sparrow. He seemed little upset by his change of quarters; he came in smiling and beaming with cordiality, shook every one heartily by the hand, spoke no word and asked no questions, brimmed over with delight and kindliness when any one spoke to him or looked at him, and even if he had not long been a well-known figure, could not have concealed for a quarter of an hour the fact that he was a harmless and well-meaning imbecile.

The second, who made his appearance about a week later, brought with him not less joyful benevolence, but was not

weak in the head; on the contrary, though harmless enough, he was a thoroughly cunning fellow. His name was Stefan Finkenbein; he was a member of the wandering beggars' dynasty of the Finkenbeins, long well known throughout the whole town and neighborhood. Of this complicated family two branches had settled in Gerbersau, counting several dozen members. They were all without exception sharp-witted fellows; yet none of them had ever come to any notable fortune, for it was an inseparable characteristic of their nature to love to be free as the birds and to rejoice in the humor of having no possessions.

The said Stefan was still below sixty, and enjoyed perfect health. He was rather thin, indeed, and his limbs were delicate; but he was always well and active, and it was something of a mystery how he had been able to foist himself upon the community as a candidate for a place in the poorhouse. There were plenty of people in the town older, more wretched, and even poorer. But from the very foundation of the institution he had been consumed by a desire to enter it; he felt himself a born Sun-Brother, and would and must be one. And now there he was, as smiling and amiable as the excellent Holdria, but with much less extensive baggage — for besides what he wore on his back he brought nothing but a stiff Sunday hat of old-fashioned respectable elegance, well preserved in shape if not in color. He bore himself as a lively social light, accustomed to the world. Since Holdria had already been assigned to Hürlin's room, he was put in with Heller, the sailmaker. He found all his surroundings good and praiseworthy, except that the taciturnity of his companions did not please him. One evening before supper, as all four sat outside the door, he suddenly began: "Say, Mr. Manufacturer, are you always so mournful? You're a regular streamer of crape!"

"Oh, don't bother me!"

"Why, what's the matter with you? Why do we all sit round, anyhow, so solemnly? We could have a drop of something good once in a while, couldn't we?"

he was a thoroughly cunning fellow. His name was Stefan Finkenbein; he was a member of the wandering beggars' [illegible] well known throughout the whole town and neighborhood. He was [illegible] sharp-witted fellows; yet none of them had ever come to [illegible] in the humor of having no possessions.

The said Stefan was still below sixty, and enjoyed perfect health. He was rather thin, indeed, and his limbs were sinewy, but he was always well and active, and it was something of a mystery how he had been able to [illegible] himself upon the community as a candidate for a [illegible]

FLOWER MARKET AT LEYDEN

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From the Painting by Hans Herrmann

"Why, what's the matter with you? Why do we all sit [illegible] something good once in a while, couldn't we?"

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Hürlin gave ear for a moment with delight, and his tired eyes glistened; then he shook his head despairingly, he turned his empty pockets inside out, and assumed an expression of suffering.

"Oh, I see — no coin!" cried Finkenbein, laughing. "Good gracious, I always thought one of those manufacturer fellows had something jingling in his purse. But today's my first day here, and it mustn't go dry like this. Come on, all of you — Finkenbein's still got a little capital in his breeches for a time of need."

Both the mourners sprang to their feet at once. They left the weak-minded old fellow sitting where he was, and the three others tottered off at a quick pace toward the "Star," where they were soon sitting on a bench against the wall, each with a glass in front of him. Hürlin, who had not seen the interior of a tavern for weeks and months, was full of joyous excitement. He breathed in the atmosphere of the place in long draughts, and absorbed his liquor in short, economical, timid sips. Like a man awakening from an evil dream, he felt that he had been restored to life again, and welcomed home by the familiar surroundings. He brought out once more all the half-forgotten free gestures of his old sporting days, banged thunderously on the table, snapped his fingers, spat at ease on the floor and scraped noisily over it with his foot. Even his manner of talking showed a sudden change, and the full-toned words of power that recalled the days when he was a commanding figure rang out from his blue lips with something of the old brutal security.

While the manufacturer thus renewed his youth and sunned himself in the afterglow of his old accomplishments and his bygone happiness, Lukas Heller blinked thoughtfully at his glass and felt that the time had come to repay the proud fellow for all his insults, and especially for the dishonoring blow with the tin wash-basin on that memorable night. He kept quite still and waited watchfully for the right moment.

Meantime Hürlin, as had always been his custom, began with the second glass to listen to the conversation of his neighbors at the next table, to take part in it with nods and grunts and play of expression, and finally to interject an occasional "Oh yes," or "Really?" He felt himself quite restored to the beautiful past; and as the conversation at the adjoining table grew more animated, he turned more and more to face the speakers and, as his old habit was, soon plunged with fire into the clash of conflicting opinions. At first the other men paid no attention to him, but presently one of them, a driver, suddenly cried out, "Lord, it's the manufacturer! What's the matter with you, you old rascal? Be good enough to hold your tongue, or I shall have to tell you something!"

Hürlin turned away, cast down; but the sailmaker gave him a dig in the ribs and murmured eagerly to him, "Don't let that fellow shut you up! You tell *him* something, the smarty!"

This encouragement at once inflamed the sensitiveness of the manufacturer to new self-consciousness. He banged on the table defiantly, moved a little nearer to the speaker, threw bold glances at him, and spoke in his deep chest-tone, "A little more manners, if you please. You don't seem to know how to behave."

Some of the men laughed. The driver answered, still good-humoredly, "Look out for yourself, manufacturer! If you don't shut up, you may get more than you bargain for."

"I don't have to," said Hürlin with emphatic dignity, once more egged on by a nudge from the sailmaker; "I belong here just as much as you do, and have got as good a right to talk as the next man. So now you know!"

The driver, who had just paid for a round of drinks at his table and so felt entitled to take the leading position, got up and came over, tired of the altercation. "Go back to the poorhouse, where you belong!" he said to Hürlin; then he took him, shrinking in alarm, by the collar, dragged

him over to the door, and helped him through it with a kick. The others laughed, and were of the opinion that it served the disturber right. The little incident was closed, and they resumed their important discussion with oaths and shouts.

The sailmaker was happy. He persuaded Finkenbein to order one more little drink, and, recognizing the value of this new associate, he bent all his endeavors to establish friendly relations with him, to which Finkenbein yielded with a quiet smile. He had once undertaken to beg where Hürlin was already at work on the same line, and had been forcibly warned off by him. In spite of this, he bore no grudge against him, and declined to join in the abuse which the sailmaker now poured out upon the absent man. He was better adapted than these who had sunk from happier circumstances to take the world as it came and to tolerate people's little peculiarities.

"That's enough, sailmaker," he said protestingly. "Hürlin's a fool, of course, but by long odds not the worst in the world. I'm glad we've got him to play the fool with up there."

Heller accepted the correction and hastened to adapt himself to this conciliatory tone. It was now time to leave, so they moved along and got home just in time for supper. The table, with five people sitting at it, had now an imposing appearance. At the head sat the weaver; then on one side came the red-cheeked Holdria next to the thin, decayed and miserable-looking Hürlin. Opposite them sat the cunning sailmaker with his scanty hair, and the merry, bright-eyed Finkenbein. The latter entertained the manager successfully and kept him in good humor, from time to time addressing a few jokes to the imbecile, who received them with a flattered grin. When the table had been cleared off and the dishes washed, he drew a pack of cards from his pocket and proposed a game. The weaver was disposed to forbid it, but finally gave in, on condition that the game should only be for love. Finkenbein burst out laughing.

"Of course, Herr Sauberle. What else could it be for? I was born to millions, but they were all swallowed up in the Hürlin stock—excuse me, Mr. Manufacturer!"

They began to play, then, and for awhile the game went along merrily, broken only by numerous jokes from Finkenbein and by an attempt at cheating on the sailmaker's part, discovered and exposed by the same clever person. But then the sailmaker began to feel his oats, and displayed a tendency to make mysterious allusions to the adventure at the "Star." At first Hürlin paid no attention; then he made angry signs to stop him. The sailmaker laughed maliciously, looking at Finkenbein. Hürlin looked up, caught the disagreeable laugh and wink, and suddenly realized that Heller had been the original cause of his ejection and was now making merry at his expense. This struck him to the heart. He made a sour grimace, threw his cards on the table in the middle of a hand, and could not be persuaded to continue the game. Heller saw what was the trouble; he discreetly said nothing, and redoubled his endeavors to place himself on a friendly footing with Finkenbein.

Thus the fat was in the fire again between the two old antagonists; and the discord was all the worse because Hürlin was now convinced that Finkenbein had known of the plot and helped it along. The latter bore himself with unchanged geniality and comradeship; but since Hürlin now always suspected him, and took in bad part his jesting designations as "the Councillor," "Herr von Hürlin," and the like, the Sun-Brotherhood soon split into two parties. The manufacturer had soon grown accustomed to the silly Holdria as a roommate and had made him his friend.

From time to time Finkenbein, who from some hidden source or other had now and then a little money in his pocket, proposed another secret excursion to the tavern. But Hürlin, strong as the temptation was for him, kept a stiff front and never went with them, although it hurt him to think that Heller was thus getting the better of him.

Instead, he stayed at home with Holdria, who listened to him with radiant smiles or with large, troubled eyes when he growled and cursed or when he drew fanciful pictures of what he would do if any one lent him a thousand marks.

Lukas Heller, on the other hand, cleverly kept up his relations with Finkenbein. It was true that in the early days he had exposed the new friendship to grave peril. One night, in his characteristic fashion, he had gone through his roommate's clothes, and found thirty pfennigs in them which he appropriated. The victim of the theft, who was not asleep, watched him calmly through his half-closed eyelids. Next morning he congratulated the sailmaker on his dexterity, paid him high compliments, requested the return of the money, and behaved as though it had all been a good joke. In this way he got Heller completely in his power; and although the latter had in him a good, lively comrade, he could not pour out his complaints against Hürlin to him quite as unrestrainedly as could Hürlin to his ally. And his diatribes against women soon became wearisome to Finkenbein.

"That's all right, sailmaker, that's all right. You're like a hand-organ with only one tune — you haven't any changes. As far as the women are concerned, I dare say you're right. But enough of anything is enough. You ought to get another waltz put in — anything else, you know — otherwise I wouldn't care if some one stole you."

The manufacturer was secure against such declarations. This was well enough, but it did not make him happy. The more patient his auditor was, the deeper he sank in his melancholy. A few times the sovereign light-heartedness of the good-for-nothing Finkenbein infected him for half an hour to the extent of reviving the grand gestures and sententious utterances of his golden days — but his hands had grown stiff, and the words no longer came from his heart. In the last sunshiny days of autumn he sometimes sat under the decaying apple-trees; but he never looked on town and valley now with envy or desire. His glance

was far-away and strange, as if all this meant nothing to him and was out of his range. As a matter of fact, it did mean nothing to him, for he was visibly breaking up and had nothing more ahead of him.

His decline came on him very swiftly. It was true that soon after his downfall, in the thirsty days when he first grew well acquainted with the "Sun," he had grown very gray and begun to lose his agility. But he had been able for years to get about and drink many a glass of wine and play the leading part in a conversation in the tavern or on the street. It was only the poorhouse that had really brought him to his knees. When he had rejoiced at his installation there, he had not realized that he was cutting off the best threads of his life. For he had no talent for living without projects and prospects and all sorts of movement and bustle; and it was when he had given in to weariness and hunger and abandoned himself to rest that his real bankruptcy took place. Now there was nothing left for him but to wait a little while until his life went out.

The fact was that Hürlin had been too long accustomed to tavern life. A gray-haired man cannot break off old habits, even when they are vicious, without damage. His loneliness and his breach with Heller had helped to make him increasingly silent; and when a great talker grows silent, it means that he is well on the road toward the churchyard.

It is a depressing sight when an artist in life, even on a small scale, who has grown old in elegant trifles and ostentation and self-seeking, instead of coming to a sudden end in a fight or as he goes home at night from the tavern, must live on to grow melancholy and end as a dabbler in the sentimental reflections which have always been foreign to him. But since life is incontestably a powerful composer, and thus cannot be accused of senseless caprices, there is nothing for it but to listen to the strains it produces, to admire, and to think the best of it. And after all there is a certain tragic beauty in the thing when such a spirit, that

has been spoiled and left raw and then beaten down, rebels at the very end and clamors for its rights, when it flutters its awkward wings and, since nothing else is left, insists on having its fill of bitterness and complaint.

There was much now that came to rub and gnaw at this rude, ill-trained soul; and it became evident that its earlier stubbornness and self-control had rested upon insecure foundations. The manager was the first to realize his condition. To the pastor, on one of his visits, he said with a shrug of his shoulders: "One can't really help being sorry for Hürlin. Since he's been looking so down in the mouth, I don't make him work; but it's no use — that's not what's troubling him. He thinks and studies too much. If I didn't know his sort too well, I should say it was just his bad conscience, and serve him right. But that's not all of it. There's something gnawing at him from inside — and at his age a fellow can't stand that long. We shall see." After this the minister sat now and then with Hürlin in his room, near Holdria's green bird-cage, and talked to him of life and death, and tried to bring some light into his darkness — but in vain. Hürlin listened or not as his mood was, nodded or hummed, but spoke no word and grew constantly stranger. Once in a while one of Finkenbein's jokes would appeal to him, and he would give a dry laugh or beat on the table and nod approvingly; but immediately afterward he would sink into himself again to listen to the confused voices that claimed his attention and tormented him without his being able to understand them.

Outwardly he only seemed quieter and more plaintive, and all treated him much as before. The imbecile alone, even if he had not been himself so feeble-minded, was capable of understanding Hürlin's condition and his gradual decline and feeling a certain horror at the sight; for this friendly and peaceful soul had become the manufacturer's constant companion and friend. They sat together by the wooden cage, put their fingers in between the bars for the fat sparrow to peck at, lounged of a morning, now

that winter was coming on, by the half warm stove, and looked at each other with as much comprehension as if they had been two sages instead of a pair of poor hopeless fools. You can see at times two wild beasts locked in together looking at each other in just the same way; according to the mood of the observer, their gaze will seem dull, amusing, or terribly moving.

What troubled Hürlin most was the humiliation he had experienced at the "Star" through Heller's instigation. At the very table where he had long sat almost daily, where he had spent his last penny, where he had been a good customer, a friend of the house and a leader in debate, there landlord and guests alike had looked on and laughed when he was kicked out. He had been forced to feel in his own bones that he belonged there no longer, that he did not count, that he had been forgotten and struck off the list and had no longer any shadow of rights.

For any other scurvy trick he would have avenged himself on Heller at the first opportunity. But now he did not even bring out the accustomed words of abuse that sat so easily on his tongue. What could he say to him? He had been entirely right. If he were still the same man as of old, still worth anything, they would not have dared to turn him out of the "Star." He was done for, and might as well pack up and go.

And now he looked forward to contemplate the destined straight and narrow path, an uncounted series of empty, dull, dead days, and at the end of it death — of which he thought sometimes with longing, sometimes with an angry shudder. It was all settled, nailed down and prescribed, unmistakable and inevitable. There was no longer any possibility of falsifying a balance-sheet or forging a paper, of turning himself into a stock-company, or by tortuous paths through bankruptcy sneaking out again into life. He was no longer a firm or a name — only a worn-out old man before whom the abyss of the infinite opened in all its terror, with the grisly skeleton silently grinning at him to

cut off his retreat. Though the manufacturer had been accustomed to many different kinds of circumstances and knew how to find his way about in them, these were different. Now he tried to wave them away with weak gestures of his old arms, now he buried his face in his hands, shut his eyes, and trembled with fear of the unescapable hand which he felt descending to grasp him.

The good-hearted Finkenbein, coming gradually to suspect that all manner of ghosts were closing in upon the manufacturer, sometimes gave him an encouraging word, or clapped him on the shoulder with a consoling laugh. "I say, Mr. Councillor, you oughtn't to study so much. You're quite clever enough — in your time you got the best of plenty of rich and clever people, didn't you? Don't be cross, millionaire — I don't mean any harm. It's just my little joke — man, think of the holy text up over your bed!" And he would spread out his arms with a pastoral dignity, as if in blessing, and recite with unction, "Little children, love one another!"

"Or, wait a bit," he would say again, "we'll start a savings-bank, and when it's full we'll buy from the town its shabby poorhouse, and take the sign out and make the old "Sun" rise again, so as to get some oil into the machine once more. What do you say to that?"

"If we only had five thousand marks — " Hürlin would begin to reckon; but the others would laugh, and he would break off, heave a sigh, and return to his brooding.

When winter had fully come, they saw him getting more silent and restless. He had fallen into the habit of wandering in and out of the room, sometimes grim, sometimes with a look of terror, sometimes with one of watchful cunning. Otherwise he disturbed nobody. Holdria often kept him company, falling into step with him in his incessant wanderings through the room, and answering to the best of his powers the glances, gestures, and sighs of the restless rambler, always fleeing before the evil spirits whom he could not escape because he carried them with him.

Since all his life he had loved to play a deceiver's part and played it with varying luck, now he was condemned to play through to a desperately sad end with his harlequin-like manners. He played miserably and absurdly enough — but at least the rôle corresponded to himself, and the former *poseur* now for the first time came on the stage without his mask, not to his advantage. The realization of the infinite and the eternal, the longing for the inexpressible, innate in this soul as in others but neglected and forgotten through a whole lifetime, found now, when it swelled up, no outlet, and attempted to express itself in grimaces, gestures, and tones of the strangest kind, absurdly and laughably enough. But there was a real power behind it all; and the uncomprehending desire for death was certainly the first great and, in the higher sense, rational movement which this small soul had known for years.

Among the queer performances of a mind off the track was this, that several times a day he crawled under his bed, brought out the old tin sun, and offered it a foolish reverence. Sometimes he carried it solemnly before him like a holy monstrance; sometimes he set it up in front of him and gazed upon it with entranced eyes, sometimes he smote it angrily with his fist, only to take it up tenderly the moment after, caress it and dandle it in his arms before he restored it to its hiding-place. When he began these symbolic farces, he lost what little credit for intelligence remained to him among his housemates, and was put down with his friend Holdria as an absolute imbecile. The sail-maker especially regarded him with undisguised contempt, played tricks upon him and humiliated him whenever he could, and was seriously annoyed that Hürlin seemed to take so little notice of him.

Once he got the tin sun away from him and hid it in another room. When Hürlin went to get it and could not find it, he roamed through the house for a while, looking for it repeatedly in many different places; then he addressed impotent threatening speeches to all the inmates, the weaver

not excepted; and when nothing did any good, he sat down at the table, buried his head in his hands, and broke into pitiful sobbing which lasted for half an hour. This was too much for the sympathetic Finkenbein. He gave a mighty box on the ear to the terrified sailmaker, and forced him to restore the concealed treasure.

The tough frame of the manufacturer might have resisted for many more years, in spite of his almost white hair. But the desire for death, though it was working almost unconsciously in him, soon found its way out, and made an end to the ugly tragi-comedy. One night in December it happened that the old man could not sleep. Sitting up in bed, he gave himself to his desolate thoughts, staring at the dark wall, and seemed to himself more forsaken than usual. In this mood of weariness, fear, and hopelessness he finally rose from his bed without knowing too well what he was doing, unfastened his hempen suspenders, and hanged himself with them to the top of the door-jamb. So Holdria found him in the morning, and the imbecile's cry of horror soon brought the manager. Hürlin's face was just a little bluer than usual, but it was impossible to disfigure it very much.

It was a terrible surprise, but its effect was of short duration. Only Holdria whimpered softly over his bowl of coffee; all the others knew or felt that the manufacturer's end had come at a good time for him, and that there was no real cause for regret or horror. And then no one had loved him.

Of course a few penny-a-liners made haste to investigate the interesting case, and communicated to the readers of their cheap papers, together with the necessary moralizings, the fact that the not unknown bankrupt Karl Hürlin had made a rather suitable end as a suicide in the poor-house.

When Finkenbein had come as the fourth inmate, there had been some complaints in the town about the way in

which the newly-founded institution was rapidly filling. Now one was gone from the number; and though it is true that paupers are usually of robust constitution and reach a good old age, yet it is also true that a hole seldom stays as it is, but seems to eat into the stuff around it. So it was here, at any rate. The colony of good-for-naughts was scarcely founded before consumption seemed to set in and went on working.

For the moment, indeed, the manufacturer seemed to be forgotten, and all went on as before. Lukas Heller took the lead in the little community, so far as Finkenbein would allow him the primacy, made the weaver's life a burden to him, and managed to put off half of the little work he was supposed to do upon the willing Holdria. He was thus comfortable and cheerful; he began to settle down as in a warm nest, and resolved not to worry under these delightful circumstances, but to live many years for his own pleasure and the annoyance of the citizens. Now that Hürlin was gone, he was the eldest of the Sun-Brothers. He made himself quite at home, and had never in his life found himself so much in harmony with his environment, whose secure though not luxurious peace and idleness left him time to stretch himself easily and to contemplate himself as a respectable and not altogether useless member of society — of the town, and of the world as a whole.

It was otherwise with Finkenbein. The ideal picture of a Sun-Brother's life which his lively fancy had painted in such glowing colors was far different from what he had found the reality to be. To be sure, to all appearance he was still the same light-footed jester as of old; he enjoyed his good bed, the warm stove, the solid and sufficient food, and seemed to find no fault with anything. He continued to bring back from mysterious trips into the town a few small coins for drink and tobacco, in which he generously allowed the sailmaker to share. He was seldom at a loss to know how to pass the time, for he knew every face up and down the road, and was a general favorite — so that

at any house or shop door, on bridge or steps, by wagons or push-carts, as well as at the "Star" and the "Lion," he was able to enjoy a gossip with any one who came along.

In spite of all this, he was not at ease. To begin with, Heller and Holdria were hardly satisfying daily companions for him, who had been used to intercourse with livelier and more rewarding people; and then he found increasingly burdensome the regularity of this life, with its fixed hours for rising, eating, working, and going to bed. Finally, and this was the main point, the life was too good and comfortable for him. He was trained to alternating days of hunger with days of feasting, to sleeping now on linen and now on straw, to being sometimes admired and sometimes browbeaten. He was used to wandering where the spirit moved him, to being afraid of the police, to having little games with the fair sex, and to expecting something new from each new day. He missed this poverty, freedom, movement and continual expectation here; and he soon came to the conclusion that his admission to the house, which he had procured by many stratagems, was not, as he had thought, his master-stroke but a stupid mistake with troublesome and lasting consequences.

If these views led Finkenbein to a somewhat different end from the manufacturer's, it was because he was in everything of an opposite temperament. Above all, he did not hang his head, nor did he let his thoughts travel ceaselessly over the same empty field of mourning and dissatisfaction, but kept them fresh and lively. He paid little heed to the future, and danced lightly from one day into the next. He captivated the weaver, the simpleton, the sailmaker Heller, the fat sparrow, the whole system on their humorous side, and had retained from his old life the comfortable artist's habit of never making plans or throwing out anchors for wishes or hopes beyond the situation of the moment. So it proved successful for him now too, since he was assured and provided for the rest of his days, to lead the life of the birds and the flies; and it was a blessing

not only to him but to the whole house, whose daily life acquired through his presence a touch of freedom and of elegant hilarity. This was distinctly needed — for Sauberle and Heller had, of their own resources, hardly more than the good-natured simpleton Holdria to contribute to the cheering and adornment of the monotonous existence.

So the days and weeks flowed along quite tolerably, and if it was not always jolly, at least there were no more quarrels or discords. The manager worked and worried himself thin and weary; the sailmaker greedily enjoyed his cheap comfort; Finkenbein shut one eye and lived on the surface of things; Holdria positively bloomed in eternal peace of mind, and increased daily in amiability, in appetite, and in weight. It would have been an idyllic state of things — but the haggard ghost of the dead manufacturer was hovering about. The hole was destined to grow larger.

And so it came to pass that on a Wednesday in February Lukas Heller had some work to do in the woodshed in the morning; and since he was still unable to work in any other way than by fits and starts and with long pauses, he came and sat down under the archway in a perspiration and developed a cough and a headache. At midday he ate hardly half his usual amount; in the afternoon he stayed by the stove shivering, coughing, and swearing; and by eight in the evening he went to bed. Next morning the doctor was sent for. This time Heller ate nothing at all at dinner; a little later fever set in, and in the night Finkenbein and the manager had to take turns in watching by him. The next thing was that the sailmaker died, recalcitrant, envious, and by no means patient or tranquil; and the town was rid of one more pensioner, which no one regretted.

It was to have better luck still. In March an unusually early spring set in, and things began to grow. From the big mountains to the ditches by the roadside, everything became green and young; the high-road was peopled by precocious chickens, ducks, and traveling journeymen, and birds of every size flitted through the air on joyous wings.

The growing loneliness and stillness of the house had been getting more and more on Finkenbein's nerves. The two deaths seemed to him of evil omen, and he felt more than ever like the last survivor on a sinking ship. Now he took to smoking and leaning out of the window by the hour into the warmth and mild spring feelings. A sort of ferment was in all his limbs and around his still young heart, which felt the call of spring, remembered old days, and began to consider whether there might not be a spring for it too amidst all this universal growing, sprouting and well-being.

One day he brought back from the town not only a packet of tobacco and the latest news, but also, in a worn bit of waxed cloth, two new pieces of paper which were adorned with beautiful flourishes and solemn official blue seals, but which had not been procured at the town-hall. How should such an old, bold traveler not understand the delicate and mysterious art of producing on nicely written documents any desired stamp, either old or new? It is not every one who knows how to do it; it takes skilful fingers and much practice to extract the thin inner skin of a fresh egg and spread it out without a wrinkle, to press on it the stamp of an old certificate of residence and permit to travel, and to transfer it cleanly from the damp skin to a new paper.

One fine day, then, Stefan Finkenbein disappeared without any flourish of trumpets from the town and the district. He took for his journey his tall, stiff hat, and left behind as a sole memento his old woolen cap which was almost falling to pieces. The officials instituted a small and considerate investigation. But since rumors soon came in that he had been seen in a neighboring jurisdiction, alive and happy in a favorite resort of his kind, and since nobody had any interest in bringing him back without necessity, standing in the way of whatever happiness he might find, and continuing to feed him at the town's expense, it was decided to abandon the investigation and allow the free bird, with the best of wishes, to fly wherever he chose.

Six weeks later came a postcard from him to the weaver, in which he wrote:

"Honored Herr Sauberle: I am in Bavaria. It is not so warm here. Do you know what I think you'd better do? Take Holdria and his sparrow and show him off for money. We might both travel on that. Then we might hang up Hürlin's sign. Your true friend, Stefan Finkenbein, Door-knob-gilder."

There might have been more trouble in the almost empty nest of fate, but the last Sun-Brother, Holdria, was too innocent and of too sedentary a disposition. Fifteen years have gone by since Heller's death and Finkenbein's disappearance, and the imbecile still dwells, sound and rosy-cheeked, in the former "Sun." For a while he was the only inmate. The numerous personages who were qualified held back discreetly and timidly for some little time; the terrible death of the manufacturer, the swift taking off of the stout sailmaker, and the flight of Finkenbein had gradually shaped themselves into a widely-known theory, and surrounded the dwelling of the imbecile for as much as six months with bloody legends and tales of horror. After this period, however, need and laziness again brought several guests to the old "Sun," and since that time Holdria has never been alone. He has seen some curious and tiresome brothers come, share his meals, and die; and at this moment he is the senior of a company of seven, without counting the manager. Any warm, pleasant day you may see the whole company on the turf by the side of the hill-road, smoking their stumpy pipes and with weather-beaten faces and various feelings looking down on the town which in the meantime has grown considerably up and down the valley.

ERNST ZAHN

STEPHEN THE SMITH (1906)

TRANSLATED BY KATHARINE ROYCE

Chapter I

TOWARD the south lay a wood, while toward the north lay another wood. Between these woodlands spread the white, wintry plain. A road ran directly onward from the southern wood, and a road ran just as directly outward to the black woodland on the north. This broad and snowy road, cut by deep wheel ruts, trampled by many heavy footprints, was really all one road, but the blacksmith's shop, which stood midway between the two woodlands, and between the two parts of the road, seemed to cut it into two separate parts. The two colors, white and black, of which this landscape was composed, struck the eye powerfully, almost oppressively. All day long no other tone was to be seen but these two, but they filled so wide a space and were so very strongly marked, that they seemed to weigh down the picture and changed the loveliness, which it perhaps might have in summer, to mournful gloom. There stood the two black pine woods, like the frame of the picture, between heaven and earth. The sky was white with clouds and the earth with snow. Both the snow and the clouds were so white, that each reflected upon the other a painfully livid brightness. The road was white, but sharply cut by the shadows that lay in the wheel tracks and footprints. The blacksmith shop also was black and white. The shingled roof, from which the wind had swept the

snow, was black, while the whitewashed walls beneath it were dirty white. Through the wide open doorway the interior of the smithy could be seen, like a cavern, and the smoke streaming out had made a sooty streak from the door to the eaves.

The gloomy landscape lay quiet; for it was Sunday and the road was but little traveled. The smithy also was quiet. Only the door of the workshop stood open as on a working day: Stephen, the smith, never closed it all the year round. Neither was there any sign of life inside the house; and yet there were three people sitting in the living room, and a fourth, Katharine, the maid, had just left the room and gone into the kitchen. At the long, deal table, dark with age, sat the three, Stephen, the smith, Maria, his wife, and the blond Ludwig, his brother. In the dark room reigned the same gloomy desolation that lay over the surrounding landscape. If one stepped from outside into the bare living room, the strange similarity of the one with the other, would strike one like a blow in the face. There were the bare, sooty, whitewashed walls, the grimy floor, a black stove, clumsy, dark colored chairs, a rough table, a chest of drawers to match, with a soiled crocheted cover on it. There sat these people, with three tin plates and a steaming platter before them. At the head of the table sat the smith, in a strong chair with hard wooden arms, which creaked whenever Stephen moved, for he was as heavy as lead. His tall form, as strong as oak, was surmounted by a head covered with crisp curling black hair. His chin was framed by a short, thick, woolly beard, and his eyebrows and moustache stood out from his face like black tufts of hair. The skin on his face was red as if it had been toughened by fire, and it was furrowed by wrinkles and scars. His forehead, which seemed like a rock, was more marked by wrinkles than his cheeks by scars; a red streak ran across his blunt, thick nose. One eye was black and most unfriendly looking, while the other eye was lacking; the half-closed eyelid hung over the empty, inflamed socket.

ERNST ZAHN

The smith sat erect, and his hairy right hand lay on the well-worn old Bible, from which he read every evening before supper. His two companions at table sat with strange humility at each side of the smith. Even now when the maid had left the room, all was still, as if no one could breathe. At last Ludwig, the smith's brother, pushed his chair back angrily and started to rise from the table.

"I will not sit here any longer," he exclaimed. His face was fair and young by contrast with the other, his figure slenderer, and more supple, and his ways more refined, such as one brings back from foreign lands. But his features resembled Stephen's, and his hair and beard were thick and wavy like the other's, only they were blond, beautiful silvery blond.

"Of course you will stay," said the smith in a low tone, but shortly, and gloomily, and as he raised his heavy arm to draw his brother back into the chair, the latter sat down again. He sat there as before, stooping over and staring at his plate. So too, sat Maria gazing into her plate. Yet her graceful blond head rose erect from her black neck frill, and her throat, which was of a strange, transparent, blue-white tint, showed a beautiful, upward curve; so that her depression only showed in the timid droop of her eyelids.

The smith took up the Bible. "And you are going to read too!" said the blond brother breathlessly, turning toward him suddenly, and once more half rising from his chair.

Stephen seized him by the wrist. "I shall do the same as every day. When you have eaten your supper, you may go, and not before!"

Ludwig sank back again. There was no use in trying to do anything else; he could not prevail against his brother's bodily strength.

Mastering both the others with his quiet force, the smith sat towering above them and began to read from the Bible. He did not seek long. He opened the book and turned a few leaves.

"And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

Stephen closed the book with a bang. "Well — I made it short enough, didn't I?" said he. A peculiar drawn look disfigured his face yet more. His lower jaw seemed to tremble as if with physical pain. Then he went on: "A man can also kill his brother, without laying hands on him — he can — he can — kill his soul, you see."

Two tears ran down Maria's pale, delicate face into her plate. She trembled as if with cold or fear. The blond brother snatched up his sharp table-knife. "Now let me go, you!" he muttered savagely.

The table stood between him and the door. Stephen rose and stood before the door. His head reached almost to the ceiling of the high room. His shoulders were broader than the doorway that he was guarding. "Lay the knife down," said he. The other looked up at him and obeyed. It was unthinkable that he could defend himself against such a man.

Stephen came slowly back to the table. "When you are through eating, no one will keep you any longer," said he, "but supper must be eaten — everything in regular order."

So then they ate their strange meal together. Each took his portion from the platter onto his plate; Ludwig set his teeth and ate, neither more nor less than on ordinary days, the smith ate just as usual, but Maria took only a few drops which seemed to choke her. When they had eaten in silence, Ludwig rose, and forced out two or three words. "Now — perhaps I may go — now —" and he took his blacksmith's cap from a chair near by.

Stephen Fausch, the smith, did not hinder him. He too arose, picked up his ragged leather apron from the floor, and tied the stiff thing on. Meanwhile his brother stepped to the door. There he made some sign to Maria, and for a moment it seemed as if she too was going to turn toward him; but in an instant it was as if fear had overcome them

both. Maria put the plates together, and the blond young man left the room without any sign of farewell. With leisurely tread the smith followed his departing brother.

On the landing Ludwig picked up a traveling sack that was already packed, slung it on a stick, and shouldered it. Then he walked out with a long, firm stride, exactly like his brother Stephen's. The smith followed the younger man down the steps of the house and as far as the workshop, into which he stepped for a moment. When he had fumbled about among his tools and came back to the threshold, he was carrying his heavy sledge hammer in his right hand, from long habit. He stood leaning on the blackened handle, the heavy head of the hammer buried in the snow, and looked after his brother, who was walking along the road northward, toward the wood. Above this wood a sharp, orange red streak now seemed to slash through the monotony of the landscape like a gaping wound. The sun was sinking. The dark, still and motionless wood seemed to keep watch and ward over the young man's path, above this the flame colored band, against which the separate treetops were outlined as if a fret-saw had cut them out of the brilliant background. A yellow tint lay also upon the road, and Ludwig's figure, the only living thing in sight, looked taller and sharply outlined. He now stood still, looked about him and threw the sack from his shoulder onto the snow. When Stephen saw this, he stepped out into the road and planted himself firmly there, as if he were asking: What's this? What now? The brothers stood thus for several minutes, and it was strange to see the two men standing in the middle of the road, burly and motionless as if defying each other: "You can't make me stir from this spot." Finally Ludwig took up his bundle, strode off with rapid steps, soon reached the wood and disappeared. Then Stephen Fausch also left the road. He busied himself in the workshop for a while, and then went back to his wife.

Maria seemed to have been whispering with the maid in

the kitchen. As she heard his step on the landing, she slipped back into the living room, and as he entered, she seemed undecided what to busy herself with, and afraid that he might notice her confusion. Since she found nothing to her purpose, she turned at the window and faced him, supporting herself with trembling hands on the window-sill. The waning light streamed over her blond head, her slender shoulders, and her delicate, long neck. Her face was almost as white as her throat, her eyebrows were light and glistened against her brow like gold. Her blue eyes were big and dark with fear.

Stephen walked up to her and placed a chair in front of her. Then she shrank together, and crossed her slender arms, as if she were cringing from a blow.

"You needn't shiver so, I shall not beat you," said the smith. Her lips parted, but no words came at first.

"Let me — let me go — I — don't want to be in your way any more," she stammered at last.

Fausch sank into the chair, close in front of her: he was now like a block, barring her way. "Don't try it," said he, "you know me — don't you try to run away, I should have you brought back!" He threw his arm over the back of the chair, and the sudden movement made her shrink again, as if he had meant to strike her.

"No, no, I will stay," she whispered, trembling.

He leaned forward and gazed long at his beautiful wife, from head to foot. "You have nobody left," he said slowly. "Your people are all dead. That is why you took me, as you told me, for the sake of a home. But — you have one thing — a pretty face — you have that! And Ludwig found that out too."

Stephen spat.

"He — we — it all came over us so" — Maria began to explain in a frightened tone.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the smith, and grasped her wrist, which his hand encircled like a handcuff, and shook her.

She cried out.

"Be still," he commanded, "I shall not beat you." Then he pushed her from him. She slipped away to the back part of the room, found her knitting, dropped into a chair and began to put the stitches in order.

"When is the child coming?" asked Fausch after a while, speaking over his shoulder. Obediently she put her hand to her forehead and thought. "It will be in the summer," she said humbly.

Stephen got up. He took off his leather apron and went into the next room. After a time he came back in his Sunday coat, passed his wife without a word, and went out of the door. He made his usual trip to the tavern as his custom was on Sundays. It was late when he came home.

Chapter II

Maria, the smith's wife, had not been spoiled. At home her father and her brothers had beaten her, and now that they were all dead, although indeed, as Fausch's wife, she had no more blows to endure, yet her life with Stephen was none the easier because he did not strike her, as others might have done; for Stephen was a violent man — though his will was violent rather than his fists. No one else had a will of such a bull-like obstinacy. For this reason many pitied his wife, and this was why she cringed; she had grown used to cringing.

In Waltheim, the village to which the smithy belonged, a bit of news had been traveling about for some time: Ludwig Fausch was gone, and had been sent away by his brother, the smith, on account of Maria, his wife. She was going to have a baby! Finally — Ludwig —

More they would not say. The love of gossip is so mean. They only hinted, and never spoke out plainly.

All the life of the great country road passed by the smithy, a road that came from far away, and went on and on, to vanish in the far, far distance. Heavy teams came by on working days, as well as the lighter traveling carriages of country doctors or commercial travelers and the

rumbling carts of the peasants. They knew of the smithy on their way, and used to give Stephen Fausch work. His best customers were the cattle and horse dealers, who used to travel to North Germany, and also southward toward Italy. They called the smithy their halfway house and always had Fausch attend to their wagons and their animals. Moreover, they had a certain weakness for the stubborn fellow, or perhaps this weakness was only fear of him, since he had gradually come to be a sort of master over the stretch of road on which he dwelt. Among the traders, little Moritz Hallheimer was the one who came from the greatest distance. He was a wiry, thin old man, neat and active, with gray beard and hair, bad teeth, and weak eyes hidden behind dark glasses. He was shrewd and talkative and knew a great many people, and because he thought Stephen one of the most unusual men among his acquaintance, he always stopped a while at the smithy and watched him with wonder, but could never understand him.

One evening in early summer, Moritz Hallheimer arrived from Waltheim. He was sitting in his small open wagon, driving his brown trotting horse without any whip. On both sides and at the back of the wagon were tied six horses that he had for sale. Their hoofs and legs were white with dust, for they had made a long journey. The trader came onward from the woods toward the smithy through the golden light of the setting sun. So bright was this golden haze between him and the blacksmith shop, that the horses and wagon could not be seen, and Stephen, the smith, who was hammering at a wagon in front of his workshop, suddenly saw him appear with his trotting horses as if coming out of a fire. Fausch shaded his eyes with his swarthy arm, then he bent once more over his work and let the trader come up to him. Hallheimer found other customers already there. For a time the road was blocked with vehicles. Two peasants stood watching Stephen, who was mending their broken pole with a metal ring. Beyond them, a woman sat, on a wagon loaded with vegetables, waiting for the smith to shoe her mare who had gone lame.

"Good evening, Stephen," said the trader, and received a curt greeting in return. Then Fausch drove the last nail into the pole of the peasants' wagon. As he stood erect again, the brilliant purity of the evening seemed, as it were, to recoil from his grimy figure. No brightness appeared on his swarthy face surrounded with the thick black beard. His flannel shirt, trousers and leather apron, and even his arms and hands were as dark as the inside of his workshop, whose dinginess he seemed, as it were, to wear on his person. And the grimy fellow, who seemed really an insult to the sunset glow, stood there like a tree trunk, taller and broader than any one else on the road.

"You can harness up," said he to the peasants, who at once went to bring their poor old nags from a hitching post near by. The vegetable woman began to unharness her little horse; but Stephen did not concern himself about her. He turned to the trader.

"You have come over the mountains from Italy?" he asked.

Hallheimer held out his hand, which the smith took, at the same time glancing at the wagon and inspecting the horses.

"I haven't any work for you today," said the trader, "I only thought I would pass a word with you."

"The gray has a shoe loose," said Stephen, untying the horse he had pointed out.

"Never mind. He can easily go as far as the stable," said the other, declining the proffered aid; but Stephen was already leading the creature to the ring in the wall, where he tied him. So the little man got down from the wagon, laughing to himself, and let the smith have his own way. He knew Stephen. Whatever he took into his head, he must do. Many complained of him for this reason. He never asked what work he should do, but took it in hand himself, and did it according to his own ideas, no matter if the customers told him ten times over that they wanted it done differently.

Meanwhile the woman on the vegetable wagon was growing uneasy. "Hallo, smith," she called out, "I came here first. You must take my horse first!"

"That's so," said Hallheimer goodnaturedly, "she did come first."

"After I've done with this, or not at all," said the smith, loosening the shoe from the gray's foot.

The woman scolded and swore. "What kind of behavior is that! Do you think I have stolen my time? Are you going to let me take my turn or not?"

"After I've done with this, or not at all," said Fausch, and as she came up close to him, he turned his back on her with a jerk. At this, she was beside herself, harnessed up her horse and turned away from the smithy toward Waltheim. Her grumbling could be heard for some time.

While the smith was still busy shoeing the trader's horse, a piece of work which he did without any help, an agonizing cry was heard through the closed windows of his house. Then a second and a third.

"What's that?" asked Hallheimer.

"She is in labor," growled Stephen.

Thereupon the trader, thinking to make himself agreeable, tried to say something fitting. "If only it is a boy, to carry on your name, Stephen Fausch . . ."

The smith muttered something to himself, which his companion could not understand.

"The first child! What a pleasure it will be to you," the trader went on eagerly.

"It isn't mine," said Stephen Fausch gruffly. With his one eye he glared at the man, so that his words stuck in his throat. Only then did the rumor that he had heard occur to Hallheimer:—the rumor that the smith's wife had been over-intimate with her husband's brother.

At the top of the stone steps of the house there now appeared a woman who looked very stout, because she wore so many petticoats. With an important and mysterious look, she nodded to the smith.

"It has come, Stephen Fausch. You have a boy. I—wish you joy!" she called out. Since the smith behaved as if he saw and heard nothing, her embarrassment increased; she went dejectedly back into the house.

Stephen laid down the file with which he had been scraping the horse's hoof, and slowly turned to the trader. "Did you hear what the mid-wife said?" he asked.

Moritz Hallheimer felt in his pocket and took out a little goldpiece. "You must make the child a present at the christening," said he, offering the goldpiece to the smith. But Stephen would not notice the trader's hand. The eager little old man was quite out of countenance. He laid the goldpiece on the window-sill of the workshop. "Take it to the child, Fausch, take it," he begged in his embarrassment.

The horse was now shod, and Stephen led it back to the wagon and tied it there. Suddenly he raised his great dark head. "Do you know what the boy's name is going to be?" he asked, and his face had the same stubborn look that it had worn when he told the vegetable woman to wait. It seemed as if his square forehead projected still more and even his nose had a more obstinate and uncompromising look. "He is going to have a queer name, the boy," he went on. He was uncommonly talkative, though he spoke slowly and with difficulty: "A strange name. He is to be called Cain."

As he said this, he came out from behind the wagon and approached Hallheimer, looking at him with a grim laugh.

"What—what's that you say?" stammered the little man.

The smith nodded. "Yes, yes," he said.

"You can't mean that," said the other. He got into his wagon, took his place on the seat and repeated: "You don't mean that, Fausch."

"He is going to be called Cain," said Stephen indifferently, without raising his voice. But his manner seemed to say: "Move me if you can."

The trader looked for some money, to pay for the work, and handed it down to the smith. "They'll refuse to name the child that," said he.

"They'll have to," answered Stephen. "Did you pick up anything among the Italians this time?" he asked. And without ceremony he reached in under the oilcloth cover that was spread over the trader's wagon.

Hallheimer leaned back from his seat into the wagon and took out a little box without any cover from under the oilcloth. "I may as well show you this," said he. In the box lay an object carefully wrapped in cloth and cotton wool. Hallheimer unpacked it and handed it to the smith. "A Roman bronze," said he, "I got it in Milan from an old junk man."

Stephen took the little figure, a boy running a race, a work most delicately and perfectly formed. He placed it upright on the palm of his broad, fire-scorched hand. The sun had gone down behind the woods, and only the afterglow still lay over the road, but on the smith's heavy hand the tiny figure stood as if it were alive, in the infinitely pure light.

The trader watched the smith raising and lowering his arm, as if the better to appreciate the beauty of the work of art. Then Fausch began to speak. His voice was quiet and almost deeper than usual, and yet one seemed to hear his quickened breathing. "Only see — the position, the head, the youthful brow, the chest, just look — Hallheimer — !"

"This one pleases you too, does it?" asked the trader. His glance rested on the heavy, grimy man, who stood bending forward, with a look of devotion on his dark, almost ugly face. Wasn't he a strange fellow! Stubborn and rough, like a brute! And yet there was in him something fine and delicate, that seemed foreign to him. God knows in what corner of his heart lurked this — this fineness, that made anything beautiful that he saw affect him as the minister's sermon or a great joy or — no matter what,

might affect other people. Every time Hallheimer came near the man he had to wonder at him, and — because he wondered at him, he kept on stopping to see him and — but — but, he was going to have the baby christened Cain —

Presently Stephen gave the statuette back. "Thank you for showing me that," said he. "If I can ever manage it, I will go to Italy myself," he added, and turned toward the south, gazing into the distance and seeming quite to forget the trader and his wagon.

Hallheimer packed up his property and took the reins. "I must go," said he, "Goodby, Stephen Fausch." And then he drove on.

The smith did not take the trouble to look after him. The wagon rolled away, accompanied by the trampling sound of the horses' feet. It was quite a while before Fausch went slowly back to his workshop, where he rummaged among his things, putting them in order, and once stepped to the door, as a wagon drove rapidly by; then he looked up at the windows of his house, as if he recollected himself, and then went up the outside steps. The trader's present of the goldpiece he left lying where it was.

As Fausch stepped into the dark upper passageway, the woman who had already told him the news came toward him, "It is good that you have come, Fausch," said she hurriedly, "I — I think you'd better send for the doctor. I don't like the way your wife is."

Then Fausch passed by her and went into the bedroom where Maria lay.

Chapter III

Katharine, the maid, had the baby with her in her own room. She understood the care of children; in her younger days she had been a nurse on a nobleman's estate. That was a long while ago. Katharine was now old and thin and worn out, but she had not forgotten about nursing. Indeed she handled the blacksmith's son with the same care and tenderness with which, in her youth, she had tended

the child of her aristocratic employers. Ever since the evening when he was born she had kept the boy with her; for it was on that very evening that the mother's lingering death began. The doctor came from Waltheim, for the smith himself brought him; but he could do no good. "Your wife is like a bit of porcelain," said he. "Such a woman cannot stand anything."

"Yes—yes!" said Stephen, passing his hand through his thick hair.

They were standing in the living room, talking together.

"Stephen!" came Maria's feeble, anxious voice from the next room.

He went into the bedroom with his heavy tread which he did not know how to subdue. "What is it?" he asked.

She held out her hand, as if to signify that he should come nearer. Then he came to the bedside, but his bearing was still exactly as it had been ever since the evening when his brother Ludwig left home.

"What—what is the baby's name going to be?" she asked tremulously.

"Haven't I told you already?" he answered, looking her straight in the face without wincing.

"Not—not that name," she begged. "Don't do that to the child."

He turned carelessly away, as if to leave the room. The doctor stood on the threshold with his hat and stick in his hand.

"Not—not that name, Stephen," begged the sick woman.

"You must not excite her," the doctor whispered to the smith. Maria interrupted. "You speak to him, Sir," she gasped out, more and more excited. "He is going to call the boy Cain."

The doctor came near laughing. "You'll not think of doing such a foolish thing," said he to Fausch.

The smith stood there with his hands in his pockets. He went back into the living room without answering. The

doctor followed him. "Give up your folly! Don't make your wife anxious! As to — the name — it would not do at all, such a name," he said persuasively.

The smith stood and let the words pass over his head indifferently, just as he might have let the rain drip down his back. Once only he spoke: "What one is, that he must be called," said he.

"You're like a bull," said the doctor angrily. "You have a right to send the child out of the house, but you have no right to disgrace it."

A sound of sobbing was heard from the bedroom. The doctor called the maid, who hurried in.

"You're like a bull," he repeated to the smith. "Your violence will be the death of your wife."

Stephen Fausch answered never a word. He turned his face fully toward the doctor — his face with one empty eye socket and one keen black eye — and stood there as if he had nailed himself fast to the spot, stood there like a bull, as the doctor had said. The doctor left; he saw that his reproofs had borne no fruit. When he was gone, Fausch went back to his workshop.

Maria's child, poor wee man, lay in the maid's room. But Maria died two days after the doctor's visit. She died late in the afternoon. All was silent on the road, in the workshop below, and in the upper room, where a few people from Waltheim went in and out, the minister, the doctor, a distant relative of Maria's and the midwife, who had been taking care of the dying woman.

The evening slowly changed to night. The silence in the smithy and all around it grew still deeper. Only Katharine still moved about in her soft old shoes that made almost no sound. Stephen Fausch rose from the table, where he had been eating something late at night. He had left the room dark, and it was as bare and gloomy as a cellar. With a few steps he crossed the room, and opened the door of the bedroom where Maria lay dead.

There was a great contrast between this room and the

dark living room from which he came. The moonlight streamed in through the bedroom windows. The maid had put up freshly washed and starched white curtains which gave a peculiar light. The cheap lace looked like marble openwork artistically carved with a fine chisel. The moonlight lay clear and dazzling, directly across the head of Maria's bed, which had been moved out to the middle of the room. The faded blue-figured pillow case, and the feather puff of the same color shimmered white, overlaid with a faint, shadowy tracery, as if made expressly to throw into relief the noble beauty of Maria's head. As Stephen Fausch entered, he cast a timid glance at his dead wife: It was wonderful to see her lying on the bed as if a halo shone around her. He closed the door quietly behind him, folded his arms, and looked once more at the bed. Then he stepped to the bedside, and stroked one of the dead woman's eyelids that had not quite closed yet, looked at her thoughtfully once more, then lifted her arms, which were bare almost to the shoulders and had been hidden under the bedclothes, and laid them full length on the coverlet. Thus he made Maria appear as if sleeping in endless peace, but he also arranged her beautiful form so that its loveliness was seen more fully than before. And when he had done all this, he stood once more with folded arms by the bed and said aloud, quite calmly: "Yes, you were beautiful, you!"

The moonlight streamed over the bed and over the dead woman, over her pure, white brow, her cheeks, her delicate nose and her almost transparent eyelids and then over her arms that lay so peacefully relaxed on the bed coverings. Her face and the pure skin of her arms were bathed in light as if in clear water. But something glistened like fine pure gold in the light, and here and there outshone it. On Maria's eyelids, above her brow, beside her cheeks, about her throat, and even where the bedclothes scarcely hid her breast. It was the dead woman's gleaming hair and eyelashes.

"Yes, you were beautiful," said Stephen Fausch. His eye wandered over her form with an observant and thoughtful expression similar to the look he had worn a few days before, when he was studying the beauty of the bronze figure. But together with the strangely happy calm with which he enjoyed his wife's beauty, the bull-like stubbornness and a self-willed indifference plainly appeared on his brow and in his bearing. This he had constantly shown to Maria, ever since he had discovered her own and his brother's unfaithfulness. He had in fact treated her as a servant. And yet Maria could have told how he had formerly adored her, as one person rarely adores another. This she had seen long ago when he used to visit her in her native village, which was a couple of hours distant from his own house; he would come almost daily, in all weathers, and often at night, in case he had had no free time during the day! His persistence had finally prevailed and won her consent. And afterward, during the years of their married life, before Ludwig had come home! Although he was a rough fellow and had his bad times, yet he had petted and indulged her—for he had loved her! But—ever since the trouble with his brother, he had, as it were, pushed her out of his way with his heavy shoes, and yet he held her once more to her duties and kept her close to him, making her feel that he was the master, whose heavy hand could drive her where he chose. Even now, when she was dead, he would not let himself feel either pity or grief for her; only the strange joy that he took in her beauty found its place side by side with the sullen resentment that he felt against her. This joy was so great, that after a while, he went slowly out into the passageway and called his maid, beckoned to her, and with his ugly hand, pointed toward the bed.

"See how beautiful she is," and smoothed a fold of the coverlet that seemed to him to break the perfection of the picture.

The maid began to sob, indeed she had been crying all

day. She was of medium height, had a withered, sinewy neck, very red cheeks, and kind-looking, watery blue eyes. She was poorly dressed, but more neatly than the smith, or even than Maria when she was living. In the midst of her weeping, she nodded to the smith, to show that she too thought Maria beautiful; but when she saw no signs of grief in him, she stopped crying in surprise, almost in fear. Shaking her head, she looked furtively, and from one side at the smith, and soon went out of the room, as if she were uncomfortable near him. Then Fausch too left the room and slept that night on a leather covered couch in the living room. He did not concern himself about the baby, in fact he had not troubled himself about it since the maid had taken it into her care.

The next day he attended to what remained to be done for his wife and for her last journey to Waltheim. As he was fulfilling the legal requirements concerning his dead wife, it occurred to him that he might save himself a journey by arranging what was necessary for the child at the same time. So he went to the registrar's office and informed the clerk, in one breath, of Maria's death and of the child's birth. The clerk, a pale young peasant, who had not been long in the place, and whose bad health hindered him from earning his living by hard work, wrote down without delay the details concerning Maria: Her name, the date of her birth, of her death and so forth. Then they came to the child. "On this day and date was born . . ."

The clerk looked up; as a newcomer he had already a nervous manner, and besides, the smith stood as close to him as if he had to guide his hand in writing.

Stephen Fausch gave the child's name: "Cain Fausch."

"Aren't you making a mistake?" asked the clerk.

"Cain," repeated the smith. His eye rested steadily on the small blank spot in the register, where the name was to stand, as if he were nailing it in place.

"But — but I can't write that down," said the clerk, blushing.

"Must I tell you again!" grumbled Stephen. "I suppose we could have chosen a better, smoother sounding name in the parish."

He spoke slowly, looking steadfastly at the paper, with his head thrust forward like a butting ram. The bashful clerk was completely intimidated by this speech. He recollected that even a bad name is still a name, that he, himself, would not have to bear that name, and that the smith, as a father, had the right to name his son as he chose. So he wrote the word in the little blank space on which Stephen's eye rested.

Accordingly Maria's boy was named Cain, duly and lawfully. When the name stood in black and white, in the book, Fausch nodded, quickly, crossly, and indifferently, as if to say: "There it stands now! Of course it would have to be there!" When the clerk went on writing: "Legitimate son of Stephen Fausch and Maria his wife, *née* Lehr," he laughed aloud, but he made no objection.

After this business was finished, there remained only Fausch's errand at the minister's to be done. The pastor was a stout, phlegmatic old man. He did, indeed, look surprised, when the smith told him the name, by which he wanted the child baptized, and thought, as the clerk had, at first, that such a name would never do. But when Stephen grew impatient, it occurred to the worthy man, that in any contest with these hard-headed peasants during his long ministry, he had often got the worst of it, and that strife always cost him too much trouble, and his weight and his comfort did not permit him to make any resistance. So he too wrote the name in the register: Cain Fausch.

Thus the smith had butted his head through two walls.

At home, in Katharine's attic room, lay the child, whose brow had just been branded with a shameful mark, and slept and throve; for the maid understood the care of babies.

During the next few days, Maria was carried away from the smithy to the churchyard at Waltheim. This gave the

village people plenty to talk about. The name that had been given to Maria's boy was noised abroad, and idle tongues found fresh work to do. Finally Stephen, the smith, had the midwife carry the boy, firmly bound on his pillows, to the church, while he and Katharine went also, as godparents. And now the village gossips could scarcely find a moment's rest.

But all this too passed by. The smith carried on his work, grumbling, obstinate and solitary, for indeed he had been a lonely man all his life. He did not seem at all changed, and the fact that his wife was gone forever seemed to have left no trace upon him. He never asked about the child and saw it more rarely than ever. Toward his customers he had his old self-willed manner, which angered some, and made others laugh. He constantly had enough customers to have found an apprentice useful, but he did not employ one. Perhaps the fact that his brother, who used to help him, had behaved badly, made him dislike to hire another helper. Nothing more was heard of Ludwig. From the day he left Stephen's house, he had disappeared from his life.

Always grimy, bearing the signs of his work upon him, Stephen Fausch went about, so that a stranger, seeing him for the first time, carried away the impression of having seen a bit of darkness in the midst of broad daylight. Yet summer was upon the land, and the smith, who seemed so gloomy both in look and bearing, often sat, when his work was done, on the bench before his door and gazed, with a peculiar expression of mingled surprise and admiration, at a beautiful sunset, a slowly drifting cloud, or the increasing brilliancy of a star. He felt a strange pleasure in looking at a well formed animal that passed along the road, would watch a beautiful woman or would slowly follow a child, the expression of whose face had struck him, would scrutinize it earnestly, though without any special friendliness, and would then turn thoughtfully away, keeping the same face in mind for some time afterward and delighting in it.

One night at the close of one of these summer evenings Stephen saw his wife's child again. It was just such a clear night as that on which Maria had lain dead on her bed. Above the black band of woodland that bounded the eastern sky with its irregular line, floated the moon, as a white pond-lily gazes forth from the dark, still water. The smith had been sitting in front of his house and was going thoughtfully upstairs to his living room, when Katharine beckoned to him in the corridor. She was quite excited, but evidently anxious as to what he might say.

"You must just see that — just once," said she and motioned toward the ladder-like stairs that led to her attic room. He followed her almost unconsciously, still lost in his own thoughts, and saw her withered hand slide upward along the banister at every step, then saw it feel over the bedroom door, and, pushing it back, cling to it as if nailed there, and only then did it occur to him that he was standing on the threshold of the maid's room, and that in the gray basket, under those rather unsightly wrappings, lay the child.

Katharine now stepped into the room and went over to the basket bed. She was trembling a little, perhaps embarrassed by her own daring. "He looks exactly — like your wife — at the last," said she, smoothing the child's coverings so carefully that he did not wake up, and handling him just as tenderly as if he were the dainty little count whom she had tended years before.

The thought was forced upon Fausch that the room looked just as the other had, in which Maria lay dead. Only it was smaller. The room was flooded with moonlight, and the radiance lay on the child's little bed as it had on the bed of the dead mother. On the bright pillow lay the little head, framed in soft, golden, downy hair. The face was full yet delicate and the lines had the same beauty as the mother's face, as it had lain there — also in the moonlight.

But in the living face there was something that enhanced its beauty beyond that of the other face. The light was so clear that the rising and falling of the chest was visible

under the knitted jacket. Every breath could be seen as it distended the delicate satiny cheeks and passed from the little mouth; and at every inward breath the lips parted like the calyx of a flower.

Fausch looked at the child for a while, and for a moment it seemed as if the sight impressed him. He leaned forward involuntarily, as if in joyful surprise, but then a curious change took place in him. His dark, angular head came further forward, so that the moonlight struck his square, stubborn brow. In the smith's face and bearing it was easy to see how his own obstinacy was strangling the little pleasure that had almost found its being.

"So that's the boy, is it? Cain Fausch?" said he. "You must be feeding him well," he added, turning away and moving toward the stairs. As he was starting to go down, he grumbled over his shoulder: "You needn't have dragged me up here just for that."

The tears sprang to Katharine's eyes. She stared after him, her whole face working. Then she went to the head of the stairs, and leaning over, she called quickly after him: "Here, Fausch!"

"Yes?" he asked, pausing.

"No one must call him that when he is big enough to know—not that."

"What else then? See that you don't meddle! The name is short. And what is, is!"

The smith stamped away toward the living room. In the clear moonlight which now lay on the landing, Katharine could plainly see from above his black woolly head. It passed through her mind that if one should strike it with a sledge-hammer, the head would be the harder of the two.

Nevertheless something of the picture that he had seen that evening remained in Fausch's mind. The impression lingered for days and weeks, and often occupied his thoughts. Once or twice he asked Katharine about the boy: "What is the little fellow doing? Do you still feed him so well?"

Chapter IV

The time passed in Waltheim as it does everywhere. At the smithy Katharine sighed at every year's end, as people are apt to do: "Lord, it has only just begun, and now it is gone already."

Once, when the old year was making way for the new, she added: "One can see by the boy how old one is growing."

The year just ending was the sixth since the boy at the smithy was born.

"The boy," Katharine would say, because she would not speak his name aloud, and yet dared not give him any other.

"Cain!" called the smith from the road, if he wanted the boy in the workshop, or through the house, if he were looking for him anywhere. His voice had a sullen ring like that of his biggest anvil, and was so loud that the name could be heard for a couple of hundred paces round about. But when anyone asked the child himself his name, he would raise his delicate face innocently to the questioner and say: "My name is Cain, Cain."

And he had already become accustomed to say the name twice, for on hearing it the first time, people either did not understand him or would not believe him.

Stephen Fausch did not treat the boy a hair's breadth differently from what he would have done had there been no spot upon him. Since the child had outgrown the exclusive care of Katharine, and could stand and walk and feed himself, he still slept in the maid's room upstairs, but he shared the living room with his father and ate with him at the table. Stephen did not concern himself much about the child, but he was not unkind to him; for the first while, it seemed as if he purposely looked over the top of the little fellow's head. But in the last year there had come a change, as the little boy's speech and ideas began to grow clearer and cleverer, and now and then, as is the case with all children, some speech of his would delight the listener

with its precocity or drollery. The smith led too lonely a life not to welcome the little change that the boy brought him, although he did not admit this, either to himself or to others. He called him oftener to the workshop, tossed him a light hammer to play with, or told him to notice how he himself shaped a horseshoe, how he bent a glowing bar, or other such matters. When the two were alone, there was a droll sort of companionship between them, and they would talk together while the smith was working. The two voices resounded between the cling-clang of the hammers, Fausch's dull or loud, then the child's voice clear and high, like the sound of the hammer when it rebounded from the very outer tip of the anvil. The figures of the man and the boy made a striking contrast. When he was near the boy, Fausch looked still heavier, stouter and darker than usual. The light of the forge fire shone on his brown face and showed the charcoal streaks on it and the dust in his thick, tangled, black beard. The sparks flew from his heavy blows, but they flew in short spurts, as straight as an arrow to the ground. They fell before the little boy's feet in their coarse shoes, or even on his shoes, and if one glowed for some time on the rough floor, the child would look at it and laugh with delight if it was slow in dying out. But the boy was as fair as the man was dark. He stood there looking as if he had just come out of a bandbox, for Katharine still took the same care of him that she had formerly taken of the little count. He did, indeed, wear coarse gray stockings, and his jacket and trousers were made out of Fausch's cast off Sunday clothes. The stuff was rough and homely, but the coarse shirt that showed at the neck and wrists was of a glistening white, that looked so strangely clean in the dirty blacksmith shop, that its color seemed, as it were, to stab through the darkness. But that was not the only bright spot about the child. His hands were small and slender and really quite delicate, and they had a clever way of touching any dirty object with the finger tips only, without getting soiled. But little

Cain's head was the fairest of all, poised on his slender white neck, that showed above the soft, unstarched collar. The boy's face was of such a rare and almost unearthly beauty, that Katharine, who was a pious soul and none too clever, often and often stood near Cain, when he was not noticing her, and gazed at him, with folded hands and open mouthed astonishment. At such times a secret shudder would pass through her spirit, and strange thoughts through her old head. Supposing that the boy, Cain, was not really a human being, supposing that — an angel was dwelling under the smith's roof, and —

When such thoughts came to Katharine, who, unlike Stephen Fausch, was a Catholic, she would cross herself. Stephen Fausch was far from regarding his boy as an angel, but when the child was not looking at him, he too would secretly marvel at his face, every feature of which was like a work of art. His mouth had kept the same shape that it had had when he was a baby; it was like a delicate flower whose calyx is just opening. His chin and nose, his cheeks and brow were very clear-cut, while his eyes were large and of a dark steel gray color. They had a strange radiance that was especially striking when the child looked up suddenly and raised his long lashes. His hair was bright golden, like his mother's, and Katharine let it grow long and hang over his shoulders. Therefore Fausch also, upon whom all beauty had its effect, often paused in his work and gloated over the child's loveliness, although he was short and abrupt with him, as with every one else, so that even their talk in the workshop was of a difficult and fragmentary sort. If the maid or any stranger came in, Fausch would speak to the boy in a harsher and more commanding tone, would push him roughly to one side and would call him by his name in a loud and purposely distinct tone. Thus he seemed to seize little Cain, as it were, in his two hands and hold him up to show him to people; "Look at him! I have branded him with the wrong and the shame that they have put upon me!" There was noth-

ing mean or hateful in this action; he merely chose to show that he was man enough to conceal nothing of the disgrace that had been forced on him, and also to exact retribution, without asking whether others liked it or not.

The boy bore this frequent change in his father's bearing, to which he had soon become accustomed, with singular ease. He never cried, but looked at Stephen sometimes, when he blustered, with big astonished eyes, and sometimes he twitched crossly away from Stephen's grasp, when the smith started to push him aside.

Meanwhile the time came when little Cain Fausch must be sent to school. Katharine took him to the village the first time he was to go. But the very next day he no longer needed her, and soon felt at home in Waltheim. Because he looked a little different from the others, a little *finer*, as it were, and wore his hair in long curls, the village children at first stared at him in astonishment; but since he was a lively little chap, he soon found playmates among them, and they grew accustomed to him, because he became used to them.

Now that the boy was but little with him, the smith seemed to neglect him and to forget him, as of old. Only some weeks later did chance call his attention to the fact that Cain had entered upon a new phase of his life. It was in the afternoon of one of those light days, when the sun seemed to spread its rays, like the glistening threads of a spider's web along the road, from one tract of woodland to the other. The southern wood cast a cool, clear shadow, and where this ended and the sun began to spin its golden web, the line was as sharp as if cut by a knife. Fausch, whose day's work was done, put his short pipe between his teeth, and wandered along the road toward Waltheim, through the sunshine, stretching out his bare, black arms before him, he bathed them in the light, and enjoyed seeing how every motion he made broke some of the golden threads. Just then he saw the little boy, Cain, coming out of the woods through the beautiful shadows. He was carry-

ing a large hempen satchel which contained his school books, and came cheerfully forward, taking rather long, vigorous steps for the length of his legs. His long hair hung down over his shoulders, and his fair face was shining. But as he crossed the line from shade to sun, the light flashed upon his bare head, and for a moment his hair shimmered like gold.

Stephen Fausch paused, involuntarily, to watch the strange picture that the handsome child made, walking through the glorious sunlight. Meanwhile the boy had seen his father. Pleasure took the place of the thoughtful expression that he had worn, and he called out gaily from some distance.

Fausch nodded, waited for him to approach, asked an idle question, whether he was coming from school, and then turned around, and the two walked home side by side. The smith did not change his sauntering gait. Accordingly the boy too had to walk more slowly, and since his father did not speak, he fell, after a few attempts at conversation, to meditating as before. By and by, however, he looked up and asked suddenly: "Why have I such a name?"

"What name?" asked Stephen.

"They all laugh when they call me that. The children say my name is a disgrace." His eyes filled with tears, but he wiped them away secretly so that his father should not see him cry. Stephen laughed harshly. He did not answer. He stooped forward, and his rugged brow looked as if he meant to butt into some obstacle; moreover he began to walk faster.

"The teacher calls me Fausch, just Fausch. He calls all the other boys by their first names," Cain began again.

"The teacher is a fool," said the smith. As he spoke, they had already reached home, and without pausing, he went at once into his workshop. The child got no other answer.

But during the next few weeks, a curious wave from Waltheim reached the smithy. The village people grew

quite disturbed over Stephen Fausch's whim, to make his boy bear the name of a sinner. They might have worked themselves into this state long ago, or even when the boy was christened, but at that time, the little commotion had quickly died away. They now actually saw among them the child whom the smith had branded with a mark, and he was a child upon whom the hardest and most commonplace among them could not look without a secret joy. Therefore they took him under their protection. The first who came to see Stephen Fausch was the teacher, an enlightened young man, and accordingly more officious. He greeted the smith a little condescendingly, a trifle masterfully. Then he blurted out at once the errand that had brought him. "You must change your boy's name, Fausch. He can't let every one call him by a shameful name like Cain. Give him your own name, Stephen, or some name or other, but—"

This long speech was cut short by a rough, short questioning "What?" from Fausch. Then the smith left the room, in which the teacher had taken him by surprise, and shut the door with a bang. He was seen no more. So the teacher had to withdraw with nothing gained. After the teacher's failure, one and another tried to make Fausch change his mind, a good-natured old man who was a member of the school board, the village constable, whose opinion of himself was only equalled by his great stature, and finally a couple of sympathetic women. Fausch let them all chatter, gave them no answer, and only ran away, when they went a little too far. And so he stemmed the tide, that flowed around his house, like a rock against which the waves must part.

"What a bullheaded fellow he is," the Waltheimers would grumble. But finally this little commotion too subsided. The smith had his own way.

Weeks and month flew past; the years went more slowly, but still they went.

As the boy, Cain, grew older, he grew more lonely. His playmates became estranged from him. He was too differ-

EVENING

From the Painting by Ludwig Dill

ent from the others, and so they did not associate much with him, and then his name always aroused their scorn. At home he still had Katharine, the maid. She spoiled him when he was twelve years old, just as she had done when he was little. He had her to thank for his unusual, almost high-bred appearance and manners. But because he had no comrades, he began to love solitude, and soon liked to sit over the books that his teacher lent him, and would sit for hours in a forest clearing to dream and marvel; but music he prized more than anything else, and especially the sound of his own voice. His singing attracted so much attention at school, that the teacher let him sing in his little choir at church on Sundays, and Cain sang in the woods and at home, but he liked best to sing in his own little room near Katharine's, in which he had slept since he had grown bigger. It was now two years since he had given up wearing his hair hanging down on his shoulders, but it was still long and soft and blond, it glittered in the sunlight, and he wore it brushed back from his forehead. His brow was so white and clear that the light seemed always to shine upon it, and his face had lost none of its pure, noble lines. His figure, too, was unusually symmetrical, at once flexible and strong. Although he was dressed in the coarse and unbecoming clothes of a villager, yet no stranger could pass him by without glancing a second time at such an uncommonly fine looking lad.

Stephen Fausch had allowed him to grow up in his home and had always behaved in the same way to him. Today indifferent, surly, speaking scornfully to him before others, tomorrow, if they were alone, talkative in his brief way, and casting stolen glances at his face and form, as if the boy's beauty were like meat and drink to him. Then came a day that altered their relations.

Chapter V

Fausch was sitting in his dark, dingy living room. It was already almost night. The smith had long ago left

off working, and the table was already set for him and the boy. Fausch did not light the lamp. He liked to sit in the dark, which grew gradually deeper in the room, until his heavy form was no longer recognizable, but only a red point, the glow and the smoke of his pipe, and his heavy breathing betrayed his presence. Then Katharine opened the door. "The boy has not got home yet," said she. Her breath came short.

"He will soon come," answered Stephen.

But Cain did not come, although he ought to have been home from school hours ago.

Another hour passed. Stephen Fausch's pipe went out. He was half dozing. Then Katharine came in again, for she could find no peace. "He — some one ought to go and look for him," she said.

Stephen waked up. "Bring in the soup. If he does not come at the right time, he can go to bed hungry," he grumbled.

The old woman obeyed, and brought in the soup, but her hands and knees were trembling. She meant to hurry over to the village herself afterward, to see what had become of the boy.

Meanwhile the smith had lighted the lamp on the table. He sat down at his own place. The red light of the lamp shone on his black woolly head. Just then footsteps were heard on the outer stairs.

Katharine ran out to the landing. "Boy," she called out in the darkness.

"Yes!" came the answer. He was there. Slowly he came up the steps. His heavy shoes usually made no noise, for he stepped very lightly. They clattered now, as if he were stumbling. The maid lifted up the light. "Jesus Christ!" she exclaimed.

The boy's face was as white as snow, his clothes were torn and in disorder, but even now they were noticeably clean.

"What has happened to you," asked the maid, quickly

and anxiously. Instead of answering, the boy asked whether his father was in the room.

"Yes, yes," she answered, and opened the door for him herself. With uncertain steps, as if feeling his way, the boy walked in. He was now thirteen years old, and both slender and strong.

"Well?" asked Stephen Fausch, taking a spoonful of soup.

Cain stepped forward into the ruddy light of the lamp. His pallor showed strikingly in the light; his eyes seemed to glow and looked very dark.

"We had a fight," he began in a breathless tone, as if he had but just shaken off a couple of his enemies. "And then I stayed in the woods a long time."

Katharine stood in the doorway, leaning forward to hear what would happen next. Fausch looked sharply at the boy. "Tell me about it," said he. As he spoke, it seemed as if Cain's appearance caught his eye more than ever.

"The other boys have been telling me why I am named Cain," he gasped out. He took hold of the back of a chair and looked Stephen in the face. It was not hard to see that something had stirred him to the depths. "They say it is because my mother was a bad woman," he went on. "But — then — I — I cannot help what my mother did — "

"Eat your supper now," said Stephen Fausch.

Cain did not hear. "I thought it over a long time in the woods," he went on in short, broken phrases. "If I am such a shameful creature — I must have done something — but — I — "

Suddenly he was quite overcome. He threw himself down with his head and shoulders on the table and wept. He looked up once. "Why must I have that name, Father? Can't I have a name like other people's?"

Stephen had laid down his spoon. He made a grimace, as if he did not know what to say. Then he swore, and then he growled: "They had better leave you alone, the vermin."

Cain regained his self-control now. He dried his eyes. Then he stood up once more by the table, slender and pale. "Whether they are talking impudence to me or not," said he in a low tone, "it always seems to me as if they are pointing their fingers at me. It is like that wherever I go."

As he spoke, he looked about him, as if he saw scornful glances aimed at him.

"You mustn't trouble yourself about the others," said Stephen.

The boy could not at first think of any answer. As he stood there seeming so lost and confused, he had a look of helplessness that would have touched one's heart. Suddenly he begged, in a trembling voice: "Couldn't you give me another name?"

Fausch's brow still kept its obstinate look. But he said in an unaccustomed, almost friendly tone: "Sit down now and eat something. One can, very likely, shut the mouths of the boys in the village."

Cain started to turn away. Then he changed his mind. Some idea seemed to calm him. He put his clothes in order and sat down at his own place. His big strong father meant to take his part! In spite of himself, this thought did him good. He began to eat.

Up to this time Katharine had stood at the door. She now left the room.

Fausch finished his supper, got up and sat down by the window, where it was dark. He lit his pipe again, and secretly observed the boy, who was sitting at the table. Meanwhile they went on talking, in brief, fragmentary sentences: How the fight among the school boys had gone? Which boys had taunted him? Had such things often happened before?

Cain only looked up from his plate when he was obliged to answer, the rest of the time he ate slowly and thoughtfully. Once he wiped a tear from his eyes. Stephen Fausch puffed at his pipe, from which but little smoke rose, as if it were drawing poorly. He had very keen sight, in

spite of having but one eye. Thus no feature of the boy's face escaped him: the delicate straight lines of the profile, the brow, the nose, the chin. Most of all he noticed the whiteness of the forehead. As he gazed, he spoke less and less, and finally was silent altogether. All kinds of thoughts passed through his mind, and he became more and more absorbed in them. Perhaps this was the first time in his life that the strong man was troubled with painful thoughts, which he could not put down and strangle, as it were, by the force of his resolute will.

After a while Cain rose, still looking very pale. "I have to study," he said. "Good-night, Father."

"Good-night," answered Stephen.

Then the boy left the room. But the smith sat buried in thought. He scarcely noticed Katharine, as she went to and fro, clearing the table. He could still see the boy's white forehead. And then it seemed to him as if an ugly spot were burning on it, and something within him seemed to say: "You branded him with that sign of shame!" For a moment facts and thoughts seemed to become confused. Then he drew his brows together and thought more intently, and saw everything clearly, as it really was: Not only had he burdened Maria's boy with that name, that shameful name, but he had marked him with the shame itself; for the name awakened the memory of the stain that clung to him from his birth. And if the village children, when they were simple, innocent little things, had made fun of Cain because he had a queer name, unlike anybody else's, now that they had grown bigger just as he had, and already knew more than was good for them, they pointed scornfully at him, not because his name was Cain, but because they knew why he bore that name. But had not he, Stephen Fausch, chosen that it should be so? The injustice that had been done him, he had chosen to nail firmly and solidly in place, and firm and solid it should remain!

Two different forces were struggling in Fausch. There

was his obstinacy, his untamed will, that he had never curbed in all his life, and together with that, something else, that was quite new, something like pity for the boy, or — who can guess what suddenly arose in revolt against his iron will. These two forces wrestled together, as it were, breast to breast, neither would yield, and there they stood, equal in strength. Fausch's dark brow flushed, he rocked back and forth in his chair, and his pipe went out. This inward strife gave him a grim hour. No inner commotion had ever before made the slow, heavy man outwardly so restless. The lamp was already burning low and threatening to go out, and Katharine had some time since finished her work in the kitchen, when he rose. He put out the smoking light, but he did not go to his own room near by. He took off his shoes as usual, carried them into the kitchen, and when he came back into the passageway, he stood still and listened. Nothing was stirring in the house. Then, in his bare feet, he went up the stairs to the attic, without noticing that Katharine's door still stood open, and slipped along, as quietly as he could, to the boy's little room. There he listened again. Then he pressed the latch, opened the door, and looked in.

Katharine came to her door half dressed. She had heard him feeling his way upstairs. She could now see him plainly, framed by Cain's doorway. A pale gray light filled the room. Her heart beat. What was the Master going to do? Surely he would not — Had he a grudge against the boy, on account of the fight?

Fausch looked over to the boy's bed. Then he drew a long breath. The lad was asleep. The smith had thought that Cain might still be crying. That was why he had come upstairs. He now closed the door again carefully.

Katharine involuntarily stepped back into her room, out of sight. She heard Fausch pass, taking care to tread softly, and go downstairs again. He went into the living room, and then she plainly heard him go into the next room. The thumping of her heart, that had almost taken away her

breath subsided. But she lay awake a long time, wondering what the smith had come up for.

Katharine might wonder as long as she chose. Fausch never betrayed by any word, what he had been looking for in the boy's room that night. Neither did he show any change in his bearing, but remained sullen and reserved as always, and seemed at first to have forgotten that he had half promised the boy his protection against the persecution of the Waltheim lads. Nevertheless, the two powers were still struggling within him, and neither got the upper hand, because both were equally strong. However, one day, and soon after a second and a third time, the Waltheimers were surprised to see Stephen Fausch appear on the principal street of the village, by broad daylight, on a week day during working hours. He had on his leather apron, and was bareheaded, dark and grimy as usual, so that every one could see that he had just left his anvil. He looked so unfriendly, that those who met him did not care to accost him. It was about the time in the forenoon when the Waltheim children were let out of school. He walked past the schoolhouse, which stood in an open square in the middle of the village, as if some errand took him further, but he stopped in a side street or behind a neighboring house and waited, with his bare arms folded across his chest.

An acquaintance asked him what he was doing.

"Waiting, if you want to know," he answered.

When the school children suddenly came streaming out of the schoolhouse, he watched for Cain, and when he had spied him, looked after him for a while, until the boy had left the village behind, and was walking toward the wood that separated the smithy from the village. Then indeed, he stepped into one of the ale houses, which are numerous in Waltheim, as in every village, took his morning drink, but said nothing here, either, about what had brought him to town, and then took himself off homeward, as surly as he had come.

"He's watching his boy," said the Waltheimers, and thought themselves very clever to have found this out. "He seems to have some kind of suspicion about the boy. The poor fellow must have a pretty hard time at home with a harsh, bristly chap like Fausch."

When the smith stood on guard for the third time, the villagers found out their mistake. This time he had slipped into the village unnoticed, from somewhere in the environs, and had taken his stand in a narrow space between some houses, that was not really a street, directly opposite the schoolhouse. Just as the clock had struck eleven, a great noise was heard from the schoolhouse, as usual, the door flew open and the children rushed out. The smallest and most turbulent came first. The older girls and boys, among whom Cain belonged, came out of the building more slowly and gently, with a sort of dignity. Cain Fausch was alone, as always. The smith had for some time noticed that something was wrong with the children, because Cain was always alone and the others seemed to avoid him. Today he was among the first of the older ones to leave the building. He walked slowly across the open space, looking neat and slender; he had been for a good while carrying his books under his arm instead of in a hempen satchel. He carried his head not merely erect, but slightly thrown backward, perhaps he involuntarily carried it higher since he had realized that there was ill-will against him in the village and that people stared at him. As the little crowd of smaller children began to scatter, a few looked after him. Two little scamps were standing close to the smith. Probably they had but just begun to go to school. "Do you know what his name is?" one of them, who could not long have been old enough to speak plainly, asked his companion slily, and with a childishly important air. Then they mentioned the name "Cain" and giggled and looked after the blacksmith's boy who was slowly walking away. The children did not know the meaning of the name, but only laughed at its oddity. Meanwhile Cain's comrades, big

strong fellows, had also come out into the open square. They were putting their heads together, as if planning some trick. Two of them came forward and looked after Cain, who was now walking down the village street.

"There he is, running away again," said one of them, the son of the tavern-keeper at the "Star," a big, large-limbed fellow, fifteen years old, speaking over his shoulder to the others.

"He's always running away, the coward," called out the others. Then the tavern-keeper's son, Adolph, shouted down the street, "Cain." He gave the name a shrill, ugly sound.

"Leave him alone," said one of those who were further behind.

"Bah, what does he matter?" blustered Adolph, "a child of sin like him!" And once again he called out sharply and scornfully, "Cain!" Suddenly he saw the others fall back from something, that passed before his eyes like a great black shadow. He had no time to see what it was; for some one seized him by the clothes over his chest and lifted him, heavy as he was, high in the air and shook him, so that his shirt and waistcoat and coat tore. Then the man let him down, took him by the collar, held him in one hand as if in a vise and hit him blow after blow, the big tall fellow, just as one punishes little children, such blows that his cries brought the people running, and two or three voices called out: "Let him go, Fausch! Do you want to kill him?" Some of the men caught the smith by the arm. Finally he let go of Adolph and shook off the hands of those who were interfering. His dark face looked gray. On his wrinkled forehead a swollen vein showed, as thick as a cord.

"There," said he breathing heavily, "if any one else wants some of the same sort, he only needs to torment the boy." Having spoken thus, he thrust his hands into his pockets and walked away with his head thrust forward like that of an ox that is pulling. "It is all the same to me, half-grown or full-grown," he growled over his shoulder.

Among those who were looking after him, and the others who were grouped around Adolph where he was writhing on the ground with pain and rage, there was not one who had any fancy for a taste of the smith's fists.

After this day the Waltheimers had something more to complain of.

"The smith doesn't want his boy to be jeered at. Then what did he give him such a name for?"

The landlord of the "Star" at first talked as if he would bring suit against the smith; but finally, when he reflected that his own young scapegrace was considerably to blame for the punishment he had received, he dropped the subject. But although the Waltheimers kept on gossiping, they were prudently quiet about it; for there were very few among them who were not afraid of Stephen Fausch. Even those who teased or tormented the smith's boy, or talked about him, and people always will have something to talk about, became cautious, but whispered and talked in secret all the more. For Cain Fausch could not get rid of his name nor wash away the stain upon his birth. The boy grew more and more quiet and reserved. He made no more complaints at home, but any one with sharp eyes could see that something weighed upon him. He gradually came to see that people had a certain right to despise him. This sharpened his hearing and made him notice how people busied themselves about him, with glances, words and gestures, whenever he came in sight. This made him grow serious quite early, and gave him a certain timidity with people. But he was inwardly sound and strong. Perhaps he had Katharine to thank for this, for in keeping his outward appearance always so neat and dainty, she might have unconsciously brought him up with a sort of inner purity and refinement. Thus it did not occur to him, since he was himself the cause of his own solitude, to seek, as he easily might have done, evil or at least lightminded distractions, to console himself for the fact that he was not of equal

standing with others. Instead of this, he learned to love work, first such as he found in his schoolbooks, but later that which he found in his father's workshop. During the boy's leisure hours, Stephen Fausch began to avail himself of his help, and Cain took as much pleasure in this activity, which brought bodily fatigue, as in the other, which occupied his mind, and found the change from the one to the other refreshing and not wearing. But he retained the peculiarity, that he would not permit the traces of his work to remain upon him after he had left the workshop. He would then change his clothes, wash and make himself tidy, so that he still kept that bright, clear-colored look, which made so striking a contrast with his father's dark and grimy aspect. Precisely this peculiarity seemed to give the smith pleasure, and without his realizing it, his sympathy for Cain grew; perhaps it also grew from the consciousness that he himself had put upon the innocent child a mark of shame which probably he would never be able to shake off. But one day, when Stephen Fausch himself became aware that a feeling for Cain began to stir within him, such as he had never known since the days when he used to take long, swift walks for Maria's sake, he laughed, in the midst of his work, a loud, harsh laugh, as the thought came over him. His laughter was at his own folly: "Fool, it isn't possible. Not a drop of your blood is in the boy's veins. They slipped him into your nest." On this day he was unusually surly and impatient with Cain; his face often wore an expression almost of hatred, when he looked at the lad. But this hatred was not real. He said to himself: "It is against nature that you should be fond of the boy! You ought to have sent him out of the house, the child of shame!" Then again the other power would struggle with this one, the thought: "Is it the boy's fault? You have branded him, and he didn't deserve it!" And his affection for Cain was there, no matter how he tried to argue it down. The inner conflict, that Stephen Fausch carried about with him, was increasing.

And withal time still came and went. One year followed the others and another followed that. Fausch knew as well as anybody else that people left Cain no peace. The boy had gone through the secondary school at Waltheim, and was now learning the blacksmith's trade with his father. Thus he was free from the jeers and teasing of his schoolmates, but yet the smith saw that the disgrace clung to him. Stephen noticed that many of his customers glanced at each other, when Cain was present or was mentioned, he saw the looks that followed the boy, if they appeared together anywhere; he saw how people nudged each other, and heard how one would say: "His name is Cain. Isn't that a foolish name for a man?" and then the other: "Do you know why the boy was named Cain?" Stephen Fausch saw that the disgrace clung to him, and his standing up for the boy now did no good, whether he threatened or even struck those whom he heard insulting him. He could not kill the thousand tongued brood of scandal-mongers. Slowly, slowly — the process took years — the smith himself began to suffer from everything that hurt the boy. Oftener and oftener his gaze rested on Cain's face and form, while new thoughts stirred within him; Did he not look like Maria, as she was, long ago, when he used to run miles to see her? Good Lord, how he had loved the girl! And he was just like Maria — was Cain!

Stephen showed no trace of what was going on within him. His rough manner did not change, for it had become a second nature to him. But in this strange and shut-in nature, something that was like a flame awoke; this was the love of his dead wife, the love that he had had for her long ago in the days of their courtship. But this love was not for the dead — although he perhaps did not know it himself — he began to love his wife in her son, in Cain, the brand of shame upon his house.

Chapter VI

Moritz Hallheimer, the horse trader, stopped with his wagon at the smithy. He was still in the habit of pausing,

when he passed that way, and he thought a great deal of Stephen Fausch, because he was a skilful workman as well as a strange sort of man. The horse and wagon, as well as Hallheimer himself bore the traces of a long journey. After the trader had greeted Fausch, who was working with Cain in the shop, he leaned against the grimy doorpost and followed with his eyes the movements of the two smiths. Fausch's work was like the heavy downward blow of a weight, Cain's like the swift flight of a feather. Their conversation took place between the blows of the hammer, and often they almost had to scream, to make their voices heard above the ringing of the metal.

"I know where there is a good business for you, Fausch," said Hallheimer.

"Is that so?" answered the smith curtly and scarcely seeming to listen.

The trader laughed. "Of course, you were brought up here, and you are contented here. You wouldn't think of leaving. Besides you are saving up many an honest penny where you are."

Fausch made no answer. He hammered away at the tire on which he was working. Only when the trader spoke of going did he let his hammer rest a moment, as if he were listening and considering the question.

"But it is a good business all the same," continued the talkative trader, stroking his thin pointed beard. "May be a better place than you have here."

At this point Fausch stopped working. "Where is it then?" he asked slowly.

"The smith at the hospice among the mountains over toward Italy is dead," the trader answered. "The landlord is not satisfied with the apprentice whom the smith left behind. He wants to rent the blacksmith shop again. One can make good money up there."

Fausch did not wait to hear the end of the sentence. He heated the tire and hammered it till the sparks flew. But his thoughts were working harder than his hammer. At

the same time he saw how the trader turned from him to the boy, with whom he began to talk. He also saw the expression of Hallheimer's face, while he was talking with Cain. Everybody wore exactly the same expression when they were looking at Cain: it was composed of surprise at his personal appearance and a more or less well concealed curiosity. Often a malicious joy was mingled with this look. Fausch had come to have a keen eye for people's bearing, and he knew that Cain was equally observant. While the trader was talking to him, a painful flush, from time to time, would pass over the young man's face, which was still as fair and smooth as when he was a boy. He was ashamed. And it was always so; whenever people stared at him he was overcome by this painful sense of shame.

Hallheimer now put an end to the interview. "Well—Good-by, Fausch," said he, "I'll be jogging along."

"Good-by!" said the smith. But as the other turned toward his wagon, Fausch came slowly and clumsily out of the workshop and motioned to him. The trader's horse had already started. Hallheimer reined him in sharply. Fausch came over to him and leaned his blackened arms on the rack of the wagon.

"I might like the smithy up there," he said.

The tradesman's instinct awoke in Hallheimer. He became so animated, that his gestures were as eloquent as his speech. "You're not determined to stay here for good and all? You will do a good business, really you will make a success, Fausch."

Each word led to another. They talked together for a long time. As Hallheimer was bidding farewell, he said: "I will write to the landlord of the tavern. I will write at once, you may rely upon me. I'll bring you the answer one of these days."

"Very well," said Stephen Fausch. His face did not betray his thoughts. When he went back to the workshop, he was very taciturn with Cain. It was plainly to be seen, that he was wholly taken up with his thoughts.

Cain and Katharine did not find out about his plans until Hallheimer had come again and again, when at last, one evening, Fausch signed the lease which the trader brought him for the blacksmith shop on the mountain. He returned after dark that evening from Waltheim, where he had gone with Hallheimer to settle the transaction. He found Cain with Katharine in the kitchen. The boy was freshly washed and had on clean clothes; with bare feet and his sleeves rolled up, he was sitting on the chopping block which Katharine used for chopping kindling wood, watching her peel potatoes. He was attached to the worn old woman, who had cherished and protected him when no one else troubled about him. A small lamp hung from the ceiling, the fire on the hearth was burning brightly, and threw its flickering light over his figure and his blond hair. The conversation had languished, and Cain was singing softly to himself in his beautiful deep voice. When he stopped, Katharine said: "Sing some more!" Above the bubbling of the kettle she heard Fausch's step. Then he entered the room. He had on his coat and his blacksmith's cap, he bid them good evening and came over to the table where the maid was sitting. "Well," said he, "next month we shall be moving."

The two looked at him and did not know what to say. It was almost a new thing to them that he should come and speak a word to them of his own accord.

"Where are we going?" asked Cain. His bearing toward Fausch was peculiar. Ever since he had known of the stain that clung to him, a sort of lost, uncertain feeling had come over him, which led him to behave with blind obedience and quiet patience to his father. Without a word he had submitted when Fausch started to teach him his own trade. Without a word he had seen the change that was taking place in Stephen's behavior, and that the smith was trying more and more to protect him from the contempt with which he met everywhere; but he felt his father's friendship as something undeserved, and accordingly still more painful

than his former harshness. Therefore there was a distressed expression on his face, as he now raised it to Fausch; he suspected what had led Stephen to decide on going away.

"I am sick and tired of this place," said Fausch.

Cain got off the chopping block. Leaning against it, he stood up and looked his father in the face. "Are you — are you going away on my account?" said he.

Fausch turned to the door, as if he took no interest in listening to idle talk; then he looked back over his shoulder at his boy. "On your account?" said he. "How should it be on your account? I have always meant to go south sooner or later."

Therewith he left the room.

Katharine stared after him with her hands folded above her wooden bowl. She had always been rather afraid of him, and had formerly almost hated him on account of his obstinacy. When he began to be kinder to the boy, she did not know what to make of it, but she felt more contented in the house than before. What he had said today, made her heart beat hard. There was something about him that seemed as if he were forcibly controlling his own stubborn nature for the sake of another, and as there had been in his obstinacy something terrifying, so now, in the force with which he for the first time constrained it, there was something almost great. Katharine felt her breath come quicker. A reverent timidity came over her. Stephen Fausch had caused it.

Meanwhile Cain had sat down again on his block and was staring into the fire, with his hands clasped around his knee. "He is going for my sake though," said he musingly to himself.

"Yes," answered Katharine.

Then they kept silence for some time. Each was thinking busily. But in Cain's mind the thoughts were fairly seething. He began to imagine what it would be like to leave the place where everybody knew him and pointed at

him scornfully. A feeling of relief arose mightily within him. He leaned back until his arms straightened out. His youthful health and strength seemed at this moment to effervesce, so that he felt a new buoyancy. This feeling overcame the discomfort he had felt at the idea of his father's making a sacrifice for him. His joy in life and work redoubled. His gratitude to his father increased and grew into a resolve: "You must work for him. Good Lord, how hard you must work."

But once a scruple came over him. "I could have gone away by myself" he said, speaking his thought aloud. Whereupon Katharine answered, after thinking a little: "It seems to me that he wouldn't let you go alone now."

After a little while longer she added: "He wants to have you with him."

And so in very few words they exchanged their ideas, until Fausch called out from the living room that he wanted his supper.

This evening Cain sang as he went to bed. Fausch listened long to his beautiful voice, not loud, but almost like a distant bell, and the sound rang strangely in the house, where all was usually so still, because joy found but little room there.

Five weeks later, early on a bright morning, a four-horse team stood before the smithy, packed with household goods and with Stephen's tools, ready for the journey. Hallheimer, who had spent the night at the smithy, was there, ready to receive the key. He was to sell the blacksmith shop among the woods for Fausch. Now, for the first time in many years, the blackened door of the workshop was closed, the shutters were drawn over the dim windows, and the house already looked dark and dead. Hallheimer stood on the road talking with the two teamsters who were helping with the moving. Then Fausch, Cain and Katharine came out of the door at the head of the steps. The early sunlight lay on the broad stone platform, to which the steps led, and on which Cain and Katharine were standing. The

bright light also penetrated the dark, forbidding passageway, the door of which Fausch was still holding open. The heavy man with his scorched and wrinkled face stood in the full brilliancy, and it seemed as if the dark and stubborn figure found it hard to leave the gloomy and forbidding house where it had dwelt so long.

Cain and Katharine had paused, with their backs toward the road, the smith having detained them by a word. Hallheimer, who was looking up at them, saw that they were stopping for something important; for they stood for a moment leaning forward, as if the smith were saying something to them that they found difficult to understand.

"You!" Stephen Fausch had called out to Cain, as he stepped across the threshold. He might have left these words until the very last, because they were not easy to say, and after his "You" it was some time before the rest would come. He seemed to break off every word from within and to drag it forth with difficulty. Finally he said: "So long as we are going away — you may leave your name behind you. I — you may change your name to Franz — for the future — it was my father's name — and he was an honest man."

When he had with difficulty forced out these scanty words, he did not wait for an answer, but turned at the threshold and closed the house door. The long disused lock creaked under the pressure of his hard fingers. Because he involuntarily made an effort with the key, the others did not know that the dark flush that rose to his forehead, was not merely a sign of bodily exertion, but that he was at the same time expending far more strength than on the refractory lock on something within himself, that yielded grudgingly like a rusty latch. To change the boy's name, and so to strike out what he, Fausch himself, had intended to stand for all time, was — was not easy! With his head thrust forward he now walked down the steps.

One of the teamsters muttered to the other: "There he comes, the old hardhead." They had had experience with

him while they were loading up; the work had to be done exactly according to his will.

Katharine shook her head gaily as she came down the steps. Her astonishment at what Fausch had said, overcame her so, that she was quite bewildered, and the motion of her head was the mechanical expression of her great satisfaction. Cain looked straight before him into the bright daylight, and his eyes were glistening. He felt as if he were entering into a new life.

The old woman was allowed to sit on a chest in the wagon. There sat the feeble-looking old soul, thin and stooping on her seat. She wore a neat, dark dress and a black kerchief on her head, beneath which looked out her pinkish wrinkled face, and her thin, reddish gray, smoothly parted hair. Her face was almost childishly small. Her faded eyes, which had neither eyebrows nor lashes, looked down at the smith and his boy, and when Fausch looked up at her, she laughed back at him. It was a long while since old Katharine had laughed.

Fausch spoke a few words more with the trader, to whom he gave over the keys of the smithy, then he growled "Go on," and the wagon started. Cain and the smith walked behind. Hallheimer looked after them and tried to recollect something. Had he not heard rightly, or had not the smith just now called his boy "Franz?" Had the old man been converted? Was he trying to wipe away the mark of shame from the poor fellow?

The wagon with its creaking wheels rumbled comfortably along the road, into the strip of woodland and out again, toward Waltheim. The sun rose higher into the blue sky. The teamsters, the smith, and the boy, Cain, tossed their smock-frocks onto the wagon. The sharply marked shadows of the men and of the horses and wagon ran along beside them with comical movements. The day was very still, the sun reigned supreme and threw so strong a light on the long, quiet, white country road and the broad, level meadows on each side, that the people seemed like toys in the full clear

light. The little caravan now reached the village, through the very middle of which ran the road, so that as they entered the place, they could already see the point at the further edge where they should leave it again. Here too there were very few on the road, because it was so early in the day. But people were stirring, right and left, at the doors and windows. The rumbling of the wagon awoke the prying eyes of Waltheim. Each one beckoned or called to the others. It was as if the little group were running the gauntlet. Fausch and Cain walked with lowered heads, the smith, because it was his surly fashion, the boy, through bashfulness, because he knew that now all eyes and tongues were busy with him once more. If from here and there a greeting came to the two, who scarcely looked to right or left, "Good-by, smith!" "I wish you a good journey, Fausch!" the smith grumbled: "Yes — yes," or some word that was hard to make out; but only rarely did he step up to one of his customers or other acquaintance, shake hands and say perhaps, "We're going away now," or something of the sort, and then turn quickly away, leaving behind those who would have been glad to ask more about this or that. And so they reached the end of the village and came out again onto the straight open road. Cain breathed more freely. As the noise of the place died out behind him, the gossip in Waltheim would cease also, when he was out of sight.

Then their journey stretched on and on. For two days they traveled over level country, stopping here and there at modest taverns to sleep or for their meals, and the ranges of high mountains, which bounded their view on the south, came nearer and nearer. Stephen Fausch and Cain still continued to walk behind the wagon in the same way. They did not talk much. But whenever they met any one, or passed through a town, glances of surprise and curiosity followed them; for it seemed as if the living images of night and day were walking side by side over the land. Fausch's clothes were dark and coarse, such as he always wore.

MOONRISE IN THE MOOR

From the Painting by Otto Modersohn

clothes were dark and coarse, such as he always wore.

They hung loose and heavy about his ungainly form, his hands were blackened, and his large head, which was set upon his broad shoulders as if thrust forward to meet some obstacle, matched them in color; his thick curly hair was deep black, and his face looked as if tanned by the hot sun of some foreign land. Beside him Cain seemed almost small, although he was well above medium height. The symmetry of his whole form was very striking. He had a free, powerful gait. But his beardless face seemed, by contrast with the brown tint of his father's, almost like the face of a tender, lovely woman. He was neatly dressed in some light color, and since, like Fausch, he wore no hat, his blond hair shimmered in the sunlight.

Wherever they went, the people said of Fausch: "Look at that fellow," then they would nudge each other: "But see what a pretty boy it is with him."

On the third day the dark, fir-covered mountains closed in around their road in a half circle. The road led deeper and deeper in between these high walls. Soon the walls became steeper, and changed to roughly piled rocky turrets, upon whose highest summits the snow glistened. Then the road itself began to climb, and wound upward over first one hill and then another, always higher and higher up a wild valley, where the villages seemed to cling to the steep slopes as if they were glued on, while there were no more cheerful white or yellow houses gay with flowers as in the valleys, but only huts darkened by the storms and poor, shingle roofed church towers. The teamsters were kept busy, for the horses found their load heavy to pull. They swore a good deal, but here and there, when the road was too steep, Fausch and the boy put their shoulders to the wagon and pushed from behind to help the horses. Katharine was still sitting on her chest; she nodded now and then, and looked frequently at Cain, whose face had always been the delight of her eyes.

The sun seemed to favor them, for they had it constantly with them. But the sky above grew always narrower, the

great mountains were piled so high. Finally even the dark firs were left behind them, and then the last villages. On each side of the road now lay treeless, green Alpine meadows, boldly arched slopes, from which arose a whole world of glistening white mountains, with glaciers, pinnacles and rocky peaks. And now the snow often lay quite near the road. Cain, who had often sung to himself in the valley, when there was no one on the road, was now silent. But he opened his eyes wide with astonishment, and often paused to draw a deep breath; for the mountain air was singularly pure and invigorating. And to his surprise, his father too would pause, and gaze at this world of mountains and rocks and snow, and once he said to him in a deep, hollow voice: "Isn't it beautiful, my boy?"

Their way now became more desolate, the mountains rose above rugged heaps of boulders, and it often looked as if the road ended abruptly, closed by a great stone door. But just as on the previous day they had met large numbers of wagons, pedestrians and muleteers, so here too they met people, teams and animals. All at once the gray rocks separated, and they reached a wide spreading mountain meadow. The road led between two small, still, dark mountain lakes, to three massive but unhomelike looking buildings. This was the hospice among the Italian Alps.

Chapter VII

Stephen Fausch stood once more at the anvil as at Waltheim, and his workshop was even blacker and gloomier than the one in the woods. It had a single blind window, but a huge door. The house was built of great blocks of granite, with the workshop in the lower part, and the superstructure projected far out over the workshop door, and was supported on wooden pillars, so that a sort of large, covered portico resulted. The sun never made its way into the dark room, but that did not trouble Stephen Fausch. He would have been somewhat out of place in a more cheerful workshop.

This large building was the oldest of the hospice buildings. Formerly the monks had lived here and had for many years kept the travelers' shelter in the mountain pass. The traffic over the long Alpine road was now increasing from year to year. Simmen, the landlord of the hospice, had been for the past ten years managing the new tavern, which stood opposite to the old shelter, and he had at this time become a man of substance.

Stephen Fausch, whose hammer was ringing through the stillness of a cloudless morning, the second since his arrival at the hospice, was just as he had always been. He was wearing his stiff, greasy leather apron, a dirty shirt, and fresh coal dust had already settled in his tangled curly hair.

"Lord!" laughed the stout landlord, Simmen, who was leaning against one of the wooden pillars and looking into the workshop, "Hallheimer had no eye for beauty, when he sent you to us."

"You must have forgotten to put it in the contract, that a man must be handsome if he wants your blacksmith shop," said Fausch; but he laughed too — an odd, contented laugh — and stepped outside to Simmen. In some way the two men liked each other, perhaps because each one saw in the other that he had been accustomed to hard work and that his life depended upon it.

Simmen was in his speech, bearing and appearance a peasant like Fausch but less rugged, and stouter, though strong and broad shouldered. He had a fat red face, a grayish white beard, and was not as large as the smith, though he was a well grown man, and had rather a large stomach, and very large arms, but he was as quick at his work as a young and slender man. The expression of his face was intelligent, and his manner of speaking was loud and commanding; one saw at once that on the mountain he was like a king whose word was the only law in his dominion.

There began to be quite a commotion in the courtyard

with its worn stone pavement that lay between the two buildings. Muleteers and travelers, who had spent the night at the hospice, were getting ready to leave. A stable boy led two horses to the smith in his workshop; in his short, selfsufficient way, Stephen took one by the halter and tied him. He did not ask what work was to be done, but cast a look over both animals and started to shoe the first. The stable boy was accustomed to take hold and help, but Fausch did not seem to notice his well meant offers, and managed the horse alone, every motion he made being peculiarly quick and sure. Simmen and the stable boy exchanged glances, and then laughed. "He knows his job," said the latter. Then he turned to leave. But just then Cain came along toward the smithy bringing a pail of milk from one of the little sheds which were scattered here and there on the meadow land around the hospice. As Simmen saw the boy coming toward the shop, he paused again and looked at him.

The morning was warm, for it was summer, and the sunlight was already flooding the meadow from which the young man was approaching. He was barefooted, like the Alpine peasants, indeed he had been used to run barefooted as a child. His well worn trousers were turned up above his ankles, and his shirt sleeves were rolled up nearly to his elbows. He came forward with a light, swaying step, dressed only in shirt and trousers. Everything about him seemed as fresh and free as the morning.

"Heavens and earth!" said Simmen.

Fausch did not pause in his work. Only once he looked quickly, almost secretly at the lad who was approaching.

"That's a fine looking boy of yours, Fausch," Simmen went on.

The smith muttered something or other. As he kept on driving nails into the horseshoe, no one would have suspected that his breath was coming faster and that Simmen's praise had aroused in him a wild joy, that seemed to be set free for the first time. Just so—with his heart

beating stormily — had he gone to see Maria, in the old days when they had given their promise to each other.

Cain now reached the workshop, and said, as he passed, "Good morning!"

"Good morning!" answered Simmen, and turned to Fausch: "What is the boy's name?"

The smith looked up with a sullen expression and was so slow in answering, that it seemed as if he first had to recollect himself, and then as if the words stuck in his throat: "The boy's name is Franz." At this very moment his stubbornness almost got the upper hand of him, and as Cain, who had carried the milk to the house, came quickly back, Fausch's hands itched to take hold of him, and show him to the landlord and say: "His name is Cain. I chose and I still choose that he should bear that name." The inner conflict in Stephen Fausch was not yet ended.

From the tavern, a voice now called to the landlord, just as Fausch was finishing his work. Simmen started to go, but the girl who had called him came out in front of the tavern, looked over toward him and then walked toward the shop, as if she were curious; so then the landlord beckoned her to come over to them.

"I want you to see my child, smith," said he, "the only one, and a tardy blossom. It had seemed as if the house would always be empty." He put his arm around the shoulders of the fifteen-year-old girl, who had approached, and pushed her toward Fausch.

The stable boy was now leading the two horses away. Just then Cain came to call Fausch to breakfast.

The girl gave her firm brown hand to the smith. "Good morning!" said she.

"There is some one else too, Vincenza," said the landlord, and pointed to Cain, and the child, without any timidity, laughed and gave her hand to the boy also.

"His name is Franz," said her father.

"Good morning, Franz!" said Vincenza.

"You look like a negress beside the boy," laughed

Simmen, and placed the girl close beside Cain. Her deep black, curly hair was braided and wound around her head, which reached to Cain's shoulder. She had a brown complexion, brilliant black eyes and handsome features of the Italian type. When she laughed at what her father said, her white teeth flashed, and the whites of her eyes too, producing a curious and striking effect between the brown skin and the black pupils.

She is an Italian," said Simmen, " she looks like her mother."

It was curious how Cain's almost feminine and yet fair and strong beauty came out by contrast with the other three people.

As the girl, Vincenza, immediately turned away with Simmen, she looked back at the boy more than once; she had never seen any one like him.

Stephen Fausch was still busy in and around the workshop, and Cain stood near by. His eyes were full of careless joy, and his chest expanded. Once he began to sing. Then he reminded his father once more: " Come now, the milk is waiting."

As they were about to enter the house, through the open door which was near the workshop, the boy once more looked about over the distant view. " It is beautiful here," said he. And Stephen Fausch did the same, only he did not speak; his words were too costly. Then they went into the house together.

From this morning on they began to feel at home without the least difficulty. Fausch found plenty of work. At the hospice there was an almost incessant coming and going of travelers on foot or in wagons, traders and trains of pack horses or mules. Many of them needed the smith's help for their animals or their wagons. By some strange chance, no acquaintance came along the road for a great while. Even Hallheimer did not come, and just as both Simmen and Fausch began to wonder at his absence, the smith got a letter saying that the trader was confined to the house

by a severe illness, so that not only had he been unable to make his usual trips to Italy, but the smithy at Waltheim was still unsold, because he had been unable to attend to such business. But because no familiar face reminded them of the old days at Waltheim, the memory of what had driven them away from there faded imperceptibly from Fausch's mind as well as from the boy's. Cain heard no more scornful speeches or mysterious whispers. And so he quite outgrew the bashfulness that had clung to him formerly; he went about freely, holding up his head, and some song was always on his lips. But Fausch too was probably passing the most peaceful days that had fallen to his lot in all his life. He was rejoiced that there was no one here, who knew about his boy's name and origin, though, indeed, he did not admit this even to himself, but still stammered over Cain's new name, and every time had, as it were, to drag it out by force. But more than all, it was the wonderful beauty of the high mountain country, that made them both feel that the change they had made was a happy one. "I always wanted to see it once," said the taciturn smith. He and Cain loved to go out in front of the house, or wander down through the meadows, or sit on some rock, to marvel over the beauty in the midst of which they lived. The wonder was ever new, in the early morning, before the dawn glimmered in the east, in the brilliancy of noon, at sunset, when the mountains and the heavens were all aflame, and in the night, when no sound broke the silence and the sky was full of stars. At these times they did not talk, but they drew great deep breaths, and felt such joy merely in living, that the two unspoiled men were almost without a wish.

All day long Cain helped his father in the shop; but when, at Simmen's wish, the smith took an apprentice, Cain had more free time and could help Katharine, who was no longer very strong, or else he was called on by Simmen for all sorts of services. He was both skilful and quick, and in dealing with people he had a ready, almost

fine manner, for which also Katharine deserved credit, for no matter how weak and tremulous her hands had grown, she still kept control of the boy. The hospice tavern, this summer, was surprisingly full of life. The guests came in such numbers that often the four large, ground floor rooms could not accommodate them all. Thus it often happened, and as his usefulness came to be known, daily, that little Vincenza would come running to the workshop: "Come, Franz, you must help us."

Then the boy would get rid of the dust of the shop, put on clean clothes, and would soon be up at the tavern, and it did not take long to teach him. He was soon able to move about among the tables and wait on the guests just as the maids, the host and his wife and the slender Vincenza did. It was a pleasure to see Franz and the others at work; they seemed to turn everything off so easily. The landlord's wife was a very tall woman, nearly a head taller than her husband; she was pale, with clear-cut features, and black hair and eyebrows. She had a sharp, decided manner, and if she went to manage matters in the room where the servants and common people, tradesmen and apprentices were, where it was often noisy and not always peaceful, she did not need any masculine intervention, to maintain order among the turbulent folk. Simmen, in spite of his rather unwieldy figure, was active and quick, and took hold himself, when there was too much for the maids to do, and helped to bring in the food and drink. But Vincenza and Cain moved swiftly and easily among the guests who crowded the rooms, were now here, now there, and their work and their pleasure in their work gave them rosy cheeks and brightly flashing eyes. It soon appeared that in the special dining room, where those of the upper classes sat, and where Simmen, who had a keen eye for the rank of his guests, always brought the more important travelers, these guests took especial pleasure in the two young people, and gradually Simmen told them to devote their whole attention to the service of this room. Many

eyes were fixed upon them. They received many friendly nods and kind words, and because they enjoyed all this together, they quite unconsciously came to feel that they belonged together, and this feeling was not confined to their work in the guests' rooms. They began to stand talking together after their work was done, then one day Vincenza ran over to see Katharine, with whom she was growing quite friendly. A few days later Cain brought her a book, that he had kept since his own school days. But when he saw that she was but little accustomed to reading, and therefore could not rightly enjoy what she read, he asked her to come with him that evening, which was a Sunday, to the meadow behind the old monastery; there he sat with her, leaning against one of the many blocks of stone, and read to her. She was so delighted, that she would not let him stop until he had read her story after story, and it grew so dark that he could no longer make out the letters. Then the young girl, who was usually impetuous and far from serious, looked very dreamy, and said, drawing a long breath: "You read beautifully."

And that was true. Cain's voice had a deep, full tone, that was excellent in reading as well as in singing.

Thus their friendship grew day by day, and this was scarcely surprising, since they were the two youngest people on the mountain, in fact the only young people.

When the summer gave way to autumn, there was less travel over the mountain road, although it never ceased entirely, even in the deepest winter, and there were many hours in which Cain and the young girl could well be spared, or thought they could. They began to wander about the mountains together. Vincenza acted as the guide, for she had climbed about everywhere with the goatherds when she was a child, and knew the way. Hand in hand, singing lightheartedly in the pure, early morning they would climb some green slope, or clamber over rocks and boulders to the snow near by, or they would wander to a dark valley not far away, where a third lake lay quite inclosed by steep

rocky walls, and known to very few people in all the world. Simmen kept a boat on this lake, a homely old thing with only one oar. When Vincenza brought Cain over here one day, he was much excited and thought that he had never in his life seen anything so beautiful as this water and the perfect stillness that brooded over it, and he would go to see it again and again, whenever he had time enough. Vincenza always went with him.

One Sunday afternoon they both found their way to the lake once more. It was Vincenza's sixteenth birthday.

At the north entrance to the mountain pass they turned off from the main road into a little rough stony path, on one side of which was a swift mountain stream, on the other a high rocky wall, and then the path disappeared in the dark valley of this black lake, like a snake creeping in among the stones. They soon reached the broad, unpainted boat, whose rusty chain was passed around a rock on the bank. Cain stepped in, took the oar and pushed the bow of the boat further up on the bank, so that Vincenza could get in more easily. With a quick spring she jumped in and sat down on the movable seat that was laid across the boat. Cain stood in the stern and dipped his old weather-beaten oar slowly and quietly. Imperceptibly they slid away from the shore. The water was black, and as smooth and still as if no breath of wind could find its way into the walled valley. The dark walls of the bank descended abruptly to the lake, and only here and there lay a gentler slope of the mountain, but even such spots were desolate and strewn with rocky débris, and the valley had no outlet excepting the way by which Cain and Vincenza had entered. The lake was as dark and still as night, but now a bit of sky, as large and still as the water, lay above it and lent the lake its beauty. It rested on the dark and jagged mountains that dipped their feet in the water, and every change of light and shade and color in the sky was mirrored in the lake.

The late afternoon was clear, and beautiful in its deep stillness, as it often is before bad weather comes on, when

the storm is drawing a deep, long breath and only the clouds are moving. The clouds mounted silently and solemnly in the west above the black, rocky peaks, now a heavy brown one, that trailed and twisted, and stretched out, till it looked like a bridge reaching from one sky margin to the other, and then rolled together again and fled away to the east just as it had approached from the west — now a thin white one, that flew past like smoke, and then a still more delicate one, that hung like a spider's web in the blue, and suddenly vanished in the midst of the sky, as if the depths had opened to draw it in.

Cain's boat sped over the water, and the play of the clouds in the sky, was all around the boat on the lake.

"Look at the clouds," said Vincenza, pointing to the water.

When they had pushed off from the shore, clear sunshine had been shining over the lake. Now it was quenched, and the shadows always made the valley seem gloomy like night. But all at once the clouds that were sailing over the sky began to glow. The white ones turned to fragments of flying flame, and a mysterious light shone through the dark ones, and bordered them with purple. And the steep and desolate banks and the lake itself glowed with the rosy hue of the clouds. It was almost as if an invisible torch-light procession were climbing upward over one of the mountains or rocky wildernesses, and all the flickering torches cast their light into the lonely valley as they moved onward and upward, step by step.

"It was never so beautiful before," said Vincenza, speaking softly for surprise and reverent joy. "You're on fire, Franz," she added with a smile, that like her voice was almost reverent.

The glow poured over the boat and the two figures in it. Cain had laid aside his workman's blouse and stood in his dark trousers and white shirt. As he sculled, his figure bent forward and back with a great pleasure in the motion, and something like timidity came over Vincenza as she kept

on looking at him, and she said hesitatingly: "You are—a handsome fellow—Franz Fausch."

"Shall we sing something?" asked Cain.

Vincenza did not answer, but as he unconsciously began to sing, she joined in with him.

They used often to sing together, when they were climbing some mountain path, but always before their singing had been some gay melody to which their steps kept time, and they had not paid much attention to what they were singing: But now Cain started one song after another, and the boundless silence that surrounded them, carried their voices back to them, in a way that delighted them. At first they sang of their fatherland, then one of the soft Italian songs that Vincenza knew and had taught Cain, and then a home song of longing: "Why, oh why, my heart, this sadness."

Cain sculled quite silently. His voice was like a bell, whose tone rose from the water, and Vincenza's like a little bell, ringing on the mountain, and they found each other, and it was as if they were floating together over the silent lake, further and further, to lose themselves among the rocky mounds beyond.

And so Cain and the young girl had almost reached the further bank which was wholly lost and solitary. Cain drew in his oar and sat down. "Let's stay here a while," said he, and they drifted contentedly and talked of this and that, and looked down into the lake, and dipped their hands into the ice-cold water and then looked up again at the clouds. Because the motion of the clouds could be better seen from Vincenza's seat, Cain got up and sat beside her in all simplicity. Then they began to interpret the manifold forms of the clouds, and laughed and made fun of each other, when one of them failed to see in the cloud picture what the other seemed to see, and got quite excited when both could plainly see the same thing. By and by a curious picture came floating past, which was composed of two clouds, one narrow and light colored and one

smaller and darker, but both clinging together as if an arm held them. They floated upward, now closer together, now almost separating, so that it seemed as if the arm that joined them must be rent in two, but yet it still held fast, and drew them, linked together, far away across the sky. At first they did not know what to make of this. Then Vincenza said: "That is you and I, Franz."

They laughed, and for the first time, they could not look at each other, but gazed almost shyly into the distance. At the same time, each felt the other's presence as something infinitely good and comforting. Cain playfully stroked the girl's left hand, which lay on the seat, with his right, and she permitted him and looked quietly down before her. They might perhaps have sat so for a long while, if Vincenza had not happened to look toward the entrance to the valley, where something suddenly caught her attention. She looked more carefully. "Isn't that—? Your father is over there, Franz," said she to her companion. He stood up and recognized Fausch, who was standing close to the shore and looking over toward them. He was not beckoning to them, but yet he looked as if he were waiting for them.

"We must go home," said Cain, and seized the oar. But even now they did not go fast. The darkness that swept down suddenly over the Schwarzsee deepened around them. The ruddy glow was quenched. The lake lay like polished black glass, and the rocky banks seemed to grow higher.

Stephen Fausch still stood and waited. In the uncertain light his figure seemed to have grown bigger, like the rocks. As the young people approached the bank, he gave them no greeting, but turned away, with his hands in his pockets, and grumbled, as they bid him Good evening: "Where have you been all this time, you two?"

He had on his black, Sunday clothes; but his face had not a Sunday expression. His brow had an angry look.

They stepped out quietly onto the bank, looked at the smith, to see if he was coming with them, then all three started on the homeward road. The night had almost descended upon them before they reached the hospice. During the whole walk they hardly spoke ten words; only Fausch grumbled once, turning to the side where Cain was walking: "Pretty soon we shall not see you all day long."

Vincenza was inwardly angry. What a bull-headed, unfriendly man he was, the smith!

Cain did not know what to make of his father. Was he displeased with something? What could have come over him? He did not know that Stephen Fausch was always looking for him when he was not by. He could not know that the man was hungering for him, perhaps without knowing it himself, and that his restlessness and that strange wild hunger, that his shut-in nature hid under a rough, ill-tempered manner, had today driven him to follow them to the lake.

Chapter VIII

Fausch's ill temper that evening did not hinder Cain and Vincenza from enjoying each other's company as before. They were too young and too thoughtless to think very much about others, and Cain did not suspect the feeling that his father was hiding. Their days grew only more lovely and contented, as the season changed again, and autumn gave way to winter. The cold weather drove those who lived at the hospice together in a couple of little rooms. The troops of travelers diminished. Only one regular post now passed over the mountain daily in each direction. The trains of pack animals still came; but the work at the smithy grew less. The apprentice was dismissed. Fausch was once more alone in his shop. Everything lay deep under the snow, the mountain meadows were one smooth sheet of white. The rocks were invisible and the lakes lay buried. The mountains round about had lost their gloomy shade, and now seemed to surround the valley with

walls of alabaster, and when the sun shone, the whole white world was radiant. Where the road, which looked like a single furrow in a white field, separated, running northward and southward, stood the hospice. The gray walls were plastered with snow, and the buildings looked like an island that is about to be submerged in some great flood. From without, the few houses on the lonely mountain had a defenseless look. But inside they were snug and warm, and there was need of warmth and comfort; for the winter storms came rushing over the snow fields, and the thick, cold clouds came, bringing night at noonday. Then the travel over the mountain road would cease, for days or weeks, or if some foolhardy man, or a daring troop came up from the valley, they would cross themselves, if they got as far as the hospice, and would gasp out: "That was tempting Providence: that road meant life or death."

The two men from Waltheim passed this first winter as contentedly as the autumn, and the same contentment lasted into the spring, when the avalanches came crashing down the mountain sides. When the danger of snowslides was somewhat less, some travelers began to come through the pass, and one of the first who came was Hallheimer, the trader. Two things were especially noticeable in him, on his arrival, first that his illness had gone hard with him, for he was still thinner and his straggling beard looked still more scanty: second, that he had felt very curious to make this mountain trip once more. He greeted the smith first, for he had taken his wagon at once to the stables, and wanted to know how Stephen liked the place, and gave him news about the smithy at Waltheim, for which he had a purchaser in view. Fausch stood by his workbench and let the words pass by him, muttered an answer now and then and let the trader see that he did not regret the change. Then the trader wanted to go over to the tavern. Simmen, with whom he was a profitable and quite a favorite guest, because he always brought news, greeted him with "Hullo," and Hallheimer soon had the conversation pre-

cisely where he wanted it. "How goes it with the smith?" he asked.

"He's an odd stick," said Simmen. "But he can work!"

Hallheimer grew so eager that his little eyes flashed. "There is something hidden in the fellow," said he. "For all that he is so crabbed and crusty outside, like an everlasting workday, another man is hidden in him, as fine as Sunday, whether you believe me or not. He appreciates everything beautiful. Mean he may be, and thorny and quarrelsome and quick with his fists. For instance, the token that he marked the boy with for life!"

"How's that?" asked Simmen innocently. "His boy, Franz?"

The trader pricked up his ears. "Franz?—Does he call him Franz now—the boy?" asked he.

The host begged him to tell what it all meant.

So then Hallheimer told Cain's story, all about his life and about his name.

"So—so," said Simmen." Base born is he then, the boy?" and the matter seemed to make him thoughtful.

Hallheimer spent the night at the tavern, and seemed to be possessed to talk about the smith. He listened to what one and another in the house had to say about Stephen Fausch, and told the landlord's wife and the maid, who brought him his supper, and the working men, with whom he presently sat in the lower room, the story of Cain's name, and why such a name was given him. He meant no harm by this, for every one knew all about it where he came from. He simply kept telling it over again in the excitement of the conversation, meaning to explain to his listeners what a remarkable fellow the smith was, in spite of his uncouthness.

It happened by chance, that neither Cain nor Fausch came over to the tavern that evening; but Vincenza heard the tale and afterward sat in the corner of the room lost in thought with dreamy eyes and burning cheeks.

The next morning Hallheimer had already started southward, when Cain came out of the milk house and fell into the hands of three workingmen belonging to the hospice, who were busy at the house. It came over him that they all stared at him, and passed some word back and forth among them and then laughed, as if they were laughing at him. He greeted them, paused and said: "Already busy, so early?"

They looked stupidly at one another. But one, an impudent fellow, who had a brandy flask behind him on the ground, even at this early hour, said: "That's a fine name you have!"

Then they laughed again still louder.

"My name?—" stammered Cain. For a moment he did not know what they meant; but suddenly the blood rushed to his face. The story of his shame had made the long journey from Waltheim here! He could not say another word, nor even look at the three men. With drooping head, he slipped away.

Soon afterward he was standing in the workshop, where Fausch was busy making a supply of horse shoes ready for the summer. The smith had not heard him come in, but, turning around by chance, discovered him, standing in a corner, with his arms hanging limply and his head on his breast. "What is the matter then?" he asked.

Then Cain looked up. His features twitched convulsively. "They know it here now — they know it all," said he slowly.

Fausch dropped his hammer. "What do they know?" he asked.

"About — my name."

A flash of anger rushed over the smith. "I would like to see who dares to call you anything but Franz here!"

"I want to go away, Father," said Cain, "out into the world — down to Italy, or somewhere — I want to go away."

"Nonsense!" Fausch burst out. "Get to work! Blow the bellows for me!"

The boy obeyed without remonstrance. "This evening we can talk about it," was all he said. Then he did as his father had told him. He still held to his decision to go away. But it seemed very hard to him. He stifled a rising sob. The smith worked as if a hundred horses were waiting at the door for the shoe he was making. Suddenly he straightened up, laid down his tools and pointed out some more work for Cain to do. He himself went out without saying where he was going. Once outside, he went to the tavern, and drank a glass in the servants' room, as he now and then did. As he sat there, he noticed exactly what he had expected: every one looked at him differently since yesterday. Simmen, whom he ran across, asked why the boy did not come over. Then he added with a half sarcastic, half angry look: "I have found out all about you and — and Franz. You weren't exactly gentle with him in those days."

Fausch was going to ask who told him about it, but Hallheimer immediately came into his head, and he began to wonder that the story of Cain and his name had not found its way to the mountain long ago. He did not answer the landlord, but gazed steadily into his glass, emptied it at one draught, muttered something which Simmen did not understand, and took himself off. A while afterward he went back to the shop, where Cain was still at work. He said nothing, but wandered aimlessly back and forth a moment, looking fixedly at his workbench, as if he were searching for something. Then he said impatiently to Cain, as if he had already sent him out: "Go along, then!"

"Where to?"

"Can't you pile the wood that was unloaded yesterday?" he growled. Cain immediately turned and went out.

Stephen Fausch stood for a moment looking toward the back door, by which the boy had gone out; then he sat down on his anvil, with his elbows on his knees, and stared at the ground, with bowed head. A band of light that came

through the great doorway fell upon him and threw the man and the anvil into striking relief against the surrounding darkness. He sat there so motionless and was so dark a shape, from his clumsy shoes to his black, woolly head, that it was not easy to distinguish where the iron of the anvil ended and the living man began, or whether the whole was not an iron statue. Moreover, no one could have seen that within him all was turmoil and struggle and strife.

But Stephen Fausch was thinking. All the way over the long road from Waltheim the slander had followed them, which they had come so far to avoid. And this gossip and scandal could follow Cain through the whole world just as easily as it had come here. There was no avoiding it! And it is your fault, Stephen Fausch, that the boy must be pursued by scandal his whole life long. But ha ha, it is fair, perfectly fair! No one asked you how you liked it, when Maria was — ha ha! So he must bear it too, the child of sin, the sinner's name! He must bear it!

It was the old struggle between defiance and obstinacy, and that other feeling of pity for the boy, that arose once more in Fausch. Only the battle had never been so fierce before. The two forces wrestled together and shook the powerful man back and forth like a reed, even although outwardly he sat so still. Then too, other thoughts came to him. He wanted to go away, the boy! All alone! They must part! Yes, yes, of course, if he were alone, the boy might more easily pass unnoticed through the world. Yes, of course! But to part!

Fausch shuddered. No longer to have the boy with him, no longer to see him — in whom — Maria still seemed to live! — He could not sit still any longer. He got up and walked back and forth. To give him up — the boy! — The thought awoke once more his strange hunger for Cain. It drove him to the door, to see him.

Over by the stable door the boy was piling up heavy logs of wood, which lay in a confused heap on the ground. He was working diligently and without looking about him.

Just then Vincenza came across the open space from the tavern. The smith involuntarily stepped behind the wall by the door, so that she would not see him. From there he continued to watch Cain.

Vincenza timidly came near, looked about to see if anyone was by, then, before he was aware of her approach, she stepped up behind the boy, who was so absorbed in his work.

"You never came near me all the morning," said Vincenza to Cain. She had quite forgotten to bid him good morning. She was not usually a very thoughtful girl, or apt to hang her head. But now she looked quiet and serious.

"You?" said Cain, turning toward her. Then he didn't know what more to say, and went on piling up the wood.

"I know why, already," said Vincenza. Leaning against the woodpile, she looked at Cain. After a short pause she continued. "They have told us what a strange name you have. So—that is why you don't come over any more, isn't it?"

"I am going away—I am going very far away now," said Cain, but even as he spoke the words, it seemed wholly impossible to him, that they could be true.

Vincenza thought a moment. Then she came closer to him. "If you go, I shall go too," said she.

He could not laugh at what she said, for all that it seemed so incredible. Since he could not find a word to say, he stroked her hand, which was resting on the woodpile.

Just then Simmen came out of the tavern door, with his face flushed, and called out angrily to Vincenza: "Are you there again with the smith's boy, you?" It was the first time that he had had anything to say against the friendship of the two.

The girl turned around. Her little brown face wore an angry expression. "I shall tell my father," said she to Cain as she went away. The boy scarcely knew what she meant. But she walked slowly up to Simmen.

"Franz wants to go away," said she when she was close to him.

"So he ought," answered the host, crossly.

"Then I shall go with him," said Vincenza.

At that, the blood rushed once more to Simmen's face. Cain heard him railing loudly at Vincenza, as he walked into the house behind her. His angry voice could be heard across the yard for some time. Cain stood and listened, with a log of wood in his hand. Over at the workshop, Fausch left the doorway where he had been watching and went out of the back door. He had no peace of mind left for his work.

Chapter IX

Simmen, the landlord, sent for Fausch to come to his little office, which was near one of the guest rooms. It was a small room, containing a table strewn with papers, and a chair in front of it; at this table Simmen used to make out the bills for his guests. A little oil lamp that hung from the ceiling was burning, and threw a fairly good light upon the two men, and around the room.

It was the evening of the day when the landlord had scolded his daughter on Cain's account.

Simmen looked very much displeased.

Fausch had come just as he was, dirty, and leaning a little forward, as if he had to thrust his great head through a wall. Something seemed to be seething in his mind, and it often seemed as if he was so busy with his own thoughts, that he could scarcely take heed of what the landlord wanted him for.

"You've got to send that boy away," began Simmen in an excited tone. "My—my daughter has seen too much of him, as young as she is, the child! She is locked in, upstairs now, until she grows tamer—but—you must send the boy away, and soon too."

Simmen's anger was evident in his hasty, broken speech. He and Vincenza must have had a stormy time together.

Fausch looked down and made no answer. His thoughts held full sway over him.

Simmen thought that he was considering what had just been said to him. "Anyway, it will be good for him, to go out into the world, your boy," he went on, trying to persuade Fausch. "It is always useful for young people."

"True," muttered the smith; he seemed to be waking up. "I will see," he added, and as Simmen began to advise him as to where he might send his boy, and offered to do something for him, he said "Yes, yes," in answer. The host might take it for assent if he chose. When he had forced out these few words in answer to Simmen, Fausch shifted from one foot to the other a few times, as if the ground were hot beneath his feet, then suddenly he walked out exactly as he had come in, with clumsy, almost groping steps, as if he were blindly following his own thoughts.

At supper, he sat with Cain and Katharine, more silent than ever. Only when the boy began to talk very earnestly once more about going away, he spoke harshly to him: "Can't you keep still till you're spoken to?"

Cain was not afraid of him. He fixed his clear eyes on his father's face. "I will depend upon myself as much as I can," he went on, speaking of his plans.

Fausch did not answer him again.

"Then — I must go, without your consent," Cain concluded, firmly. "Tomorrow morning early — I shall —"

Katharine, who scarcely knew what had happened, came around the table and took hold of the boy's sleeve with trembling fingers: "My boy — my boy!" she said in a warning tone.

But Fausch was a strange picture, as he sat there. His powerful form was trembling, as if with rage: "Can't you wait?" He forced the words out between his teeth. "Can't you wait till we have time to think of something for you?"

Cain was startled at his father's appearance and agreed. "When will you let me go then?" he asked.

"You shall soon see," said Fausch in the same troubled tone.

Cain and Katharine looked at each other involuntarily; they had never seen him like that before. He sat bowed over on the table; from time to time his dark and horny hands opened and shut convulsively, as if he were squeezing something in his hand.

"Are you ill?" stammered Cain. Then the smith pulled himself together. "Nonsense!" he growled, and then: "You shall not go, until I have thought things over for you."

There was something in these words that did not permit Cain to oppose him. "Then I will wait," said he. In the passageway he turned to Katharine, who stepped out of the room with him. "What is it, what is the matter with my father?" he asked.

Poor old Katharine was silent and thoughtful. "He is not easy to make out, the master," said she.

But after this conversation, Stephen Fausch passed a long, anxious, sleepless night. His bedroom was above the blacksmith shop, and was as bare as all the old monastery had been; a hard bed, a chair and a table were the only furniture. Fausch sat on the bed, near the open window, from which he could see the lakes and the whole Alpine valley.

At the supper table, an idea had come to Fausch, when Cain had spoken again of going away. "If the boy wants to go out of your life, Stephen Fausch, cannot you just as well pass out of his?"

He realized that it was the story of himself and the boy together that gave the material for all the scandal. And he knew perfectly well that it was he, Stephen, whose appearance and manner were so conspicuous, and who had played the principal part during the course of the events, who chiefly reminded people of the story. Cain was young and fresh and very much like other people. He lived in the present time, and suited the present time, so that the world

could take pleasure in him just as he was, and therefore might not ask very much about his past, if there was nobody there, who was associated with the past and so was more bound up with it than Cain himself. He, Stephen, was the chief obstacle that prevented Cain's story from sinking into oblivion. If he parted from the boy, people would judge him for what he was, instead of for what he had been!

Fausch had carried these thoughts upstairs with him, and they would not let go their hold on him. As he sat on his bed, he was struggling with these ideas.

Until now, Fausch had gone his own way without troubling himself about anyone. And if a wall stood in his way, he had pushed through it with his obstinate head, and if anything else was in his way, he had kicked it aside with his heavy boots. Now for once he must yield, he must admit that — that in his self-will he had been unjust. If for the boy's good he should go away, it would be like begging Cain's pardon for what he had done to him, he, Stephen Fausch, who had no need to ask anyone's pardon!

This idea was so distasteful to him, that he laughed aloud and was too angry to sit still. He snatched up the chair by its back and put it over by the window, and sat down there and gazed out into the night.

The night was very still and clear. There were not many stars in the sky, but it was mysteriously bright as if from some inner light, and the few stars in sight were large and still, especially one, which was just above a dark mountain and had a smaller companion directly above it. The star gave a bluish light, like moonlight, that shone downwards from far over the mountain. The great, solemn, silent wall of mountains, that stood round about the pass, were so clear-cut at the sky line, that one could count every summit; in the pass itself there was still a soft light, so that a part of the road was visible in the midst of the darkness, and the surface of one of the lakes lay glistening through the night.

At first Fausch did not see this nocturnal landscape, for his anger seemed, as it were, to lay a hand over his eyes. But gradually the brilliancy of the two stars, the larger and the smaller, caught his attention, then the dark distinctness of the mountains, and then the gray shimmering road and the strange light on the lake. But the more the great silent picture of the night gained power over his soul, the more did it appease his anger, until there grew in the mind of this strange man a stillness and clearness like that which lay over the landscape. At the same time something recalled to his memory how the boy Cain and Vincenza had lately wandered about together so often in this same landscape. The picture of the two handsome young people had fitted admirably into the frame of this beautiful country. He could still see them, as plainly as if they were actually before him, hand in hand, now over by the lake, and again on that distant hill slope. Perhaps it was because of his remembrance of the evening when he had gone to look for them, and had found them at the Schwarzsee, that their image grew upon him, so sharp and distinct, as they had walked close together, young and slender, and each with a different sort of beauty. He seemed to see them, and rejoiced in them as he did in the beauty of the night, and—

Gradually the reason why he was still awake came back to him: Cain wanted to go away! He had been happy and contented up there, and now he must go!

Fausch stretched himself. "He shall not go, the boy, I say so!" When this idea came into his head, he almost spoke the words aloud.

And now another thought forced itself upon him: "If he is to stay here, you will have to sing small, Stephen Fausch, you will have to take back half your life and say, I am sorry that it was all wrong!" He breathed heavily, as if he were lifting an enormous weight that was almost too much for human strength. Then he seemed once more to see Cain and Vincenza walking side by side.

"And — and — you must leave the boy," the thought came over him again. "And — you needn't deny it — you miss him whenever he is away from you. Since — since Maria gave you up for the other — you have had no other joy in your life like him — it isn't so easy to leave him for — always, you needn't pretend, Stephen Fausch!"

The smith rose and laid his hands on the window-sill. He leaned far out of the window for a long time. The cold night wind blew over his face. But it seemed as if as he rose he had made his last great effort. He passed his shapeless hand over his forehead and hair, rubbed his eye with one finger, as if he had just waked up and now he was fully in control of himself. By means of his strange, holiday joy in the two young people, whom he saw wandering through the loveliness of the night, the same strange inner joy that he felt in all beauty, he overcame the other tyrannical force which was the foundation of his character. It had taken a long time, years indeed, and it had been a life and death struggle, but yet Stephen Fausch had — perhaps only for a few days, or even a few hours, yet he had conquered his own obstinacy.

What Fausch thought of and reasoned out during the rest of the night, as he walked up and down the room, Simeon, the landlord learned on the following morning, and the others might guess it later if they chose.

In the morning, not very early, for haste was not according to Fausch's habits, he went to see the landlord. "May I have another word with you?" he asked.

The very fact that the taciturn fellow came of his own accord astonished Simmen. He willingly opened the door of his little office for him, sat down once more at his table, and Fausch stood on the very same spot as on the previous evening. Everything in the little room was just the same, except that the lamp was not burning. A gray light reflected from a bare rocky slope, filled the room.

"Have you anything against the boy himself, just as he really is," began Fausch without any preamble.

Now Simmen had slept the whole long night since yesterday's fit of anger, and in the morning his wife, who was quieter than he, and rather peaceable for all that she was so resolute, had interposed between him and the stubborn Vincenza to such good purpose that his anger had passed away. He listened to Fausch's question quietly, settled himself comfortably in his chair, and answered: "What should I have against him? On the contrary, he is handy, very useful and a confoundedly handsome fellow, only you must send him away, Fausch — it wouldn't suit me at all, what was beginning between my daughter and him, that —"

He said all this quietly, sometimes making a gesture to explain his words better. When he paused, Fausch began to speak. Simmen could not understand the first word that he spoke, he brought it out with so much difficulty, and only gradually did his speech become clearer and more connected.

"I — I — want to ask you," he began — "keep him here, my boy. I marked him with that name — so that everybody points at him. I — did him an injustice! Don't send him away for that. I —"

Fausch had to pause a moment. The sweat stood on his dark forehead. He passed his hand helplessly across it.

"Yes, yes," said Simmen meanwhile, "What you say is all very true, but — still he can't stay here, where he will see Vincenza every day —"

Fausch came nearer and interrupted the landlord. Still in the same broken and difficult way he went on: "You said yourself that the boy is all right. He ought to come into notice — I think."

At that Simmen laughed: "Only not for my girl — not for Vincenza! She can take her choice by and by — Smith — I tell you, down in Italy as well as on our side." His laugh turned into a smile. It had done him good to boast of his own property, while speaking of his daughter's prospects.

The smith looked about him almost timidly. It was

strange to see such a self-willed man stand there helpless and confused. He laid one hand on the landlord's arm, and his hand was trembling. "I will give the boy up to you," said he. "If I go away from him altogether, it will soon be forgotten, what he was, and how it was when we were together. Believe me, Simmen. And then when I am gone you could lead him just as you want to. And by and by no one would ask any more what his name was, or where he came from — and if he does not turn out as you expect — you could send him away any time — you could — "

He stopped suddenly. Then he reached out his hand, because he could not find the right words, and his face blazed scarlet. It came over him that he was like a beggar. Simmen looked silently at the floor. He was a reasonable man, and he saw what his words cost the smith, indeed he hardly recognized him. And the boy was a good boy, one in whom you could take some pleasure — and — Simmen could not help it, that Vincenza's face seemed to come before his eyes. The girl's behavior did not seem as if the smith's boy meant merely a passing fancy to her.

"You'll never repent it," Fausch forced the words out.

Thereupon the landlord replied thoughtfully: "So let it be then. I will give him employment, Franz, and — he will stay here alone, as I said! Time will show what comes of it — not that he is to think — that he is going to get the girl — But he will do well enough for me so far!"

The last few words Simmen said for his own satisfaction, meaning to cloak his own yielding disposition.

"Good!" said Fausch, and no more, not one unnecessary word. The way in which he now spared his words, showed how hard it must have been to bring them out before. His awkwardness slowly changed back again into moroseness. Once, when he was already on the threshold, it seemed as if something more had occurred to him. He half turned back toward Simmen, but changed his mind. With his brow thrust forward, he tramped heavily out of the house. "Good-by!" he said.

Simmen looked for some time at the door through which the smith had passed. Only now did he become fully aware, how bitter the hour must have been for the smith. He could still see him standing there, dragging out one sentence after another, as if he were doing some fearfully heavy piece of work, then stopping again and feeling, as it were, for the words which he could not find. At last he wrenched his thoughts away from the image of Fausch and began to consider the circumstances that had brought him here. He was not at all pleased to have Fausch leave the smithy again, for he had had no other such worker there, but yet he agreed with him: as long as he and the boy were together, their common story would never be buried in oblivion. So the smith must go, certainly he must go. If the boy — if Franz alone was there — Simmen brought his fist down on the table half angrily, half laughing to himself — it wasn't really so wholly impossible, that they should make a match of it, the boy and Vincenza! The host thought how nicely Franz had served in the guests' room, and what a favorite he had been with the travelers, and he, Simmen, was not a narrow minded man: A serious and hardworking man stood higher in his esteem than a rich or well born man of whose character one could not feel so sure. So it did not seem so impossible to him, about Vincenza and the boy. But — Simmen hit the table another blow as if he were impatient — all the same the affair was not quite to his taste.

Chapter X

When Hallheimer, the trader, came back from Italy, he heard something on the mountain which astonished him; he was not to sell the smithy at Waltheim, for Stephen Fausch was going back to his old place within a short time.

The trader asked what had happened.

He got no answer. The smith only said, rudely: "It's none of your business what I do." So Fausch gave the trader a new nut to crack, though he had long puzzled over

the smith's behavior and character. But Simmen, the landlord, of whom he also asked the cause of Fausch's departure, was equally evasive.

Meanwhile Stephen Fausch passed the days exactly as he had always done; now and then he nailed up a box of his possessions and gradually got his goods once more ready for moving. Cain and Katharine tiptoed around him with a sort of timidity. There was something about Fausch that they did not rightly understand, and that made them both involuntarily feel small and humble. Yet his manner had not altered in any way; he was sparing of his words as always, and the little that he said had a surly sound. He was just the same on the morning when he called Cain into the workshop, and told him that he, himself, was going back to Waltheim. Cain had listened eagerly, had then remonstrated, and when his father gave him a harsh answer, he had at last kept silence, to think things over. And now, days afterward, he was still thinking about it all. First he would feel joyful, and then doubtful. That he, Cain, was to stay at the hospice made him joyful, and yet he felt doubtful, because he could not understand his father's sudden decision to leave the place. But one thing was clear to him: If he were freed from his father's presence, the talk about the disgraceful name his father had given him would sooner die out, even if only gradually. He, Cain, if he were alone, would have the courage to stay there, and bear it, if a couple of servants, men or maids, should ridicule him for a time, until — they got tired of it. But his father? What was coming over the strange man? Was it not almost certain that he was making a sacrifice for him, for Cain, by going away? Did he repent of the injury he had formerly done him? And was he — it often seemed so in little things — was his father somewhat fond of him, of Cain?

The young man was able to think all this over quietly. Thus far, he had felt neither love nor dislike for Fausch. In all his life, his father had done too little for him to

FOREST MEADOWS

OSKAR FRENZEL

awaken the boy's love, and yet too much to permit of his hatred. But the more he now thought and speculated about Fausch, the clearer it became to him, that in the smith's deeper self, there was something which, until now, he had neither known nor understood, something which gave the boy food for thought, and made him feel a sort of awe, as if Stephen were suddenly very far above him.

Meanwhile the time passed by. The day came when Fausch's goods and chattels were all packed. The same wagon stood again before the door that had brought the goods up to the smithy months before. It was now loaded, and Katharine, a feeble old woman, took her place on a chest as before. But today she could not keep her eyes dry, for Cain was staying behind, her boy on whom she had leaned for many years with a feeling of comfort.

Cain had already been living at the tavern for some days, and was sharing a room with a young working man, and had nothing in the world to complain of. The number of guests had increased again, there was plenty of work, and Cain and Vincenza hurried about as of old in the room where the higher class of guests were entertained. Both did their work even more quickly and easily than before, for an inner joy shone in their faces and made their fingers fly. The guests watched them with pleasure. If the landlord's wife looked in, her expression was serious and austere as always, but she saw nothing in Cain to find fault with, and if Simmen himself looked into the room on the right, he would nod to himself and then go out again: the smith's boy was not so bad to have about, he was a real help in the house!—

Stephen Fausch's horses and wagon started, and the teamsters ran alongside. Then Cain came out of the tavern with his father, who had been to say good-by. Simmen and a few others came out, to see them off.

"I will go with you as far as the path to the Schwarzsee," said Cain to Fausch, then hurried after the wagon, swung himself up and sat down by Katharine. No pair could be

more unlike: he was like a slim, flexible young tree, she like an old, old crumbling branch. Stephen Fausch noticed nobody. In his dark, heavy clothes, with his blacksmith's cap on his head, he walked behind the wagon with lowered head, and fell into a long, regular step, that suited the rhythm of the rumbling wheels. He scarcely seemed to concern himself even about Cain.

The weather was about to change. The clouds were chasing each other across the heavens and slowly weaving themselves into a silver gray shroud. But the sun behind them was still so strong, that a dazzling light fell upon the landscape. The gray road lay clearly defined with the lakes on both sides and the dark rocky peaks on the north, among which it vanished. Along the pale colored road, in the dazzling light went the heavy wagon, the smith marching stolidly behind it.

He now fell back a few steps.

As he did so Katharine laid her trembling hand on Cain's. "I must tell you," she began mysteriously, and looking back at Fausch, as if he might hear her.

"Yes?" asked Cain.

"You may believe me, that it is half killing him," said she, motioning toward Fausch, "that he cannot have you with him any more."

"Yes—I—" said Cain, and could say no more. He looked back at his father: the feeling grew upon him, that the smith was doing a great thing for him.

"You may believe me," whispered Katharine. Then they both kept silence, and involuntarily looked uneasily at the smith who was tramping along behind them.

The lakes were now left behind, and the rocks were nearer. Far behind from the hospice some one came running swiftly. It seemed to Cain that he recognized Vincenza; but she turned off from the road into some hilly meadow land and disappeared. So he was not sure whether he had seen correctly. He and Katharine now began to talk of things that had to do with their approaching separa-

tion. The old woman was overcome by grief, and her tears flowed freely down the furrows on her wrinkled cheeks. Cain tried his best to comfort her, and his sympathy and affection moved him so, that he did not notice when they passed the Schwarzsee and the road began to wind down toward the valley. When he again took note of his surroundings, they had gone quite a distance downward, and he called out quickly to the teamsters to stop and let him get off. At the same time he looked about for Fausch, who was nowhere to be seen.

"My father has not come with us," said he to Katharine. "You might wait for him here," he added, and then said: "I must go now. I shall meet my father on the road." Then he shook hands with the old woman.

"We shall never see each other any more," she lamented.

"Take care of yourself," said he. "You will be glad to be back in the old place again down below!"

Then he jumped down. He hurried on up the hill and did not look back again at the wagon, which stood in the road. A restlessness drove him involuntarily onward. It seemed strange that his father did not come.

As he approached the entrance to the pass, he saw the smith standing by the roadside. He was leaning against a rock, from which there was a wide view over the high plateau. The glaring light, that the white sky cast over the earth, had grown yet more dazzling. The whole valley floor seemed to be brought quite close to the eyes. The dark lakes glistened; the road lay between them, a blinding stripe of white. The mountains stood like a dark wall beneath the glistening sky, showing every gap and fissure in the rocks, which were like scars on their weatherbeaten forms.

As Cain came forward, Fausch turned toward him. "Are they waiting down there?" he asked.

Just then some one came out from between the rocks, by which he had been standing. It was Vincenza. She behaved as if her coming was perfectly natural, but her face was

flushed. "I didn't have a chance to bid you good-by, Smith," said she.

He took her hand in his, and as Cain came forward just then, he took the boy's right hand too, and laid it beside Vincenza's. The two hands had plenty of room in one of his. The smith laughed to see them there. But it was such a strange, uncanny laugh, that it entirely changed the expression of his face. It was neither merry nor scornful. Perhaps all the kindliness that Stephen Fausch had to give lay in that one laugh. His solitary eye looked larger and more quiet than usual. And as his gaze rested thus on them both at once, they felt as if he were trying to say: "So — you — you belong together, you two!" And then, with his free hand he stroked their two hands a moment, and that was perhaps, together with the laugh, the first outward sign of love that Stephen Fausch had shown to anybody, since Maria's death. It was a poor, thirsty, dried-up love, and far from tender; but as his hand touched Cain's, something happened that no one saw; the smith's thick lips trembled for a brief moment, in the midst of his black, woolly beard. It seemed improbable and yet — perhaps Fausch had stifled a sigh. Then he looked away from the two young people, and as he turned about, his eye wandered once more slowly, and as if reluctant to lose the sight, over the Alpine meadows, to the hospice, and over the dark and rugged mountains and over the dazzling heavens above.

"Well, good-by!" said Fausch to Cain and the girl, letting their hands go. And he walked heavily away, with head bowed down, showing in his bearing the old churlishness. He did not look back again.

Cain and Vincenza looked after him for a long time. They could see him plainly. If he sometimes disappeared around a bend of the road, he would reappear far below, and they would soon see him again, walking behind the wagon, dark and heavy and big.

Cain was very still. He had taken off his hat and held it in both hands. He did not really know why he did so.

He looked after his father in amazement, and it was on his account that he had involuntarily taken off his hat.

Vincenza now turned to him. She was breathing fast, as if she were only now beginning to recover from her quick run. "Do you know why I ran after you, Franz?" she asked. Her eyes were shining.

Cain shook his head.

"It came over me suddenly that your father might take you with him."

The fear that had driven her to follow him, still showed in her words and in her eyes. Cain laid his hand thankfully on hers; they were still watching the little group that was moving downward to the valley.

"He is a strange man, your — the smith," whispered Vincenza at last. "I was always half afraid of him."

Cain suddenly seemed to awaken from deep thought. He turned, took the girl's hand, and started to walk back toward the hospice with her. As they walked, he gazed into the distance with wide open eyes. He was still carrying his hat in his hand. Suddenly he stood still. "It seems to me," said he, with a dreamy look, "that we have all misunderstood him — my father."

Vincenza dared not reply, his manner was so unusual. He walked silently along beside her, and that evening, and many times afterward, his thoughts were more with Stephen, who was gone and never came back, than with Vincenza, on whom his heart was set, and from whom he soon learned that Simmen would not refuse her to him.

JAKOB SCHAFFNER

THE IRON IDOL

TRANSLATED BY AMELIA VON ENDE

IN one of our great industrial centres lived a childless couple, a workingman and his wife, by the name of Höflinger. They had been married ten years and had become resigned and accustomed to their solitude. The husband turned the sentiment, which no offspring of his could claim, toward the hopes and the aims of his class. He was known as a well-read, serious and reliable man, whose political activity was founded upon practical reality rather than theory and who was hostile to the exploitation of principles popular with the ordinary run of Socialist party leaders, but not always truly beneficial to the proletariat. Hence he was held in higher esteem by the trades union than by the party. He usually had a young man in his home who not only enjoyed room and board at moderate price, but, if he had a good head, was trained by Höflinger in class-consciousness and a practical knowledge of the tactics of life. Thus Höflinger had no difficulty in filling the vacancy whenever his boarder drifted away.

As he showed a fatherly solicitude toward these youths, so his wife spent upon them her unused motherly gift and feeling. She had never buried any of the ardent desires of her womanhood; she had never known sickness. In spite of the shadow of her childlessness she went on living her full, significant woman's life, and constantly defied the gnawing thoughts of what might have been by a cheerful acceptance of what life offered her. She was the daughter of a tailor, a dark blond of trustworthy aspect, quietly

inclined toward play and fancy, but contented to express it before the men of her household only as a half humorous, half melancholy mood. Her father had called her Marie, but one of his customers, a lieutenant-general, had named her Spiele. She on her part called her husband, whose real name was Ferdinand, " the long one," not so much for his bodily length, as for the extent of his activities, calculations, schemes and unionist controversies, which sometimes made her lose her breath and her judgment.

At this time Höflinger was occupied with the organization of a laborers' consumers' league. This work frequently called him away and kept them apart, and though he always returned to her, still she resented his having been separated from her for a time. In the factory, too, Höflinger occupied a special and independent position: he served the iron saw, a giant of double a man's height. This had impaired his hearing; figuratively speaking, you had to use Gothic type in order to make him understand. On the other hand, this deficiency favored his tendency to accept the phenomena of life summarily and to survey things from the organizer's standpoint.

To this couple came a young laborer, Victor Pratteler, who had but recently stepped out of the narrow, securely guarded realm of hand labor into the open and surging world of the iron proletariat. He completely lacked that personal imagination and that subjective instinct toward his material which make the very soul of the locksmith and the blacksmith, so that their grasp becomes the servant of a sixth sense, the sense of form. Pratteler's hand had not groped its way toward this higher sense, so he employed it where the course of work goes on abstractly without a will of its own and a predestined process is watched by a soulless eye and served by a passionless grip. On the other hand, there survived in Pratteler something of the whimsical mood of that vanishing social type, the journeyman. He had highfaluting ideas and pompous movements, and his speech was bloated with superfluous pathos and per-

sonal conceit. His relation to life was a many-linked chain of demands. Neighbors, both men and women, he looked upon from the viewpoint of a young steer; the former were either obstacles or they were bridges and steps leading to the pretty girls, women and other treasures that he would have liked to own all for himself. Thus by a single formula he interpreted the whole world. His manner was violent, combative and absolutely inconsiderate without an inkling of deeper relations. He was a native of Switzerland.

Like a motley calf driven by a storm he stumbled one evening into the garden of the Höflingers. He arrived at the fence on a Wanderer wheel, rather new in its coat of white paint, sharply applied the brake, jumped down before it had worked, threw the wheel with a careless movement against the paling and approached before Spiele's wondering eyes with big important stride. It was a week-day, but he wore his good blue suit. Rakishly perched on his black hair was a sporting-cap with green and brown pattern. Under his Adam's apple, like a burning heart that had been pushed up, was a blood-red necktie, the ends of which flared out from under his turned-back white collar. He had strapped his trousers, so they bulged outward, but Spiele immediately noticed that he had crooked legs and wore tan sandals over gray hose. Out of the collar rose a neck, long, thin and bare as a vulture's, and crowned by a round black wrangler's head of medium size.

In an offhand manner and with slight embarrassment he touched his cap and said that he was Victor Pratteler. When Spiele did not immediately reply, he asked with some discomfort, whether he was at the Höflingers', and frowned. With laughing eyes Spiele answered that he was right and told him to sit down on the garden bench and wait until Höflinger came home. Then she continued to sprinkle the young lettuce plants which she was growing in narrow beds; when she had finished them, she turned her attention to the peas. She did not look at the young workingman again; she had already a colored photograph of him in her

head which she could bring to life whenever she wished. When she turned the corner of the cottage with her sprinkler, she began to hum. The gay lad gave her cause for amusement and put her in a merry mood. She read in his frown that attitude of unreasoning resignation without which a waiting heart cannot maintain its elasticity for any length of time.

When the day's work was over, Höflinger arrived on his wheel and took charge of the new guest. He showed him the shed which already housed Spiele's bicycle and which by a clever manipulation would hold all three. At supper it appeared that Pratteler, who was to begin work in the factory the next morning, did not expect his trunk until tomorrow or the day after. So Spiele had to fetch a pair of old trousers and a coat and working-shirt of "the long one," which she did with ever-laughing eyes. In order to avoid all misunderstandings, Pratteler at once declared that he hated all emperors and kings, because they were parasites who sucked dry the German people and were responsible for its poverty and stupidity. They should be smoked out in order to make way for the state of the future, which would establish conditions more worthy of human society. If things had gone right, those conditions might already exist, for after all labor is in the majority; but the leaders and representatives put the workingmen's money into their pockets and cared not for the shrunken stomachs when they were sitting among the fat ones. Reichstag was nothing but a club of heavy-weights. All were eager to have the ministers tickle them under the arms; that meant some service to be rendered, and this again brought marks of honor and perhaps a decoration. Everything was humbug. Workingmen should help themselves and throw out all that reactionary mob, army, clergy and aristocracy; otherwise there could be no change for the better.

Spiele looked frequently at the long one to watch his expression while the savage Swiss was emptying before him his social carry-all. Höflinger said so little that the

young man suspected him of being at heart a bourgeois, of having fallen away from the labor cause after he had earned his house and garden. Höflinger noticed that his wife was secretly laughing, and, as he knew that she was sometimes opposed to his well-planned tactics, he let her enjoy the diversion. The more firmly a man is standing on his feet, the more indifferently will he look at the antics of others. Besides, he knew exactly who had furnished her the premises upon which she was now basing her amused opposition to him.

Early in the morning the two workingmen rode together to the iron-works spreading out at the opening of a ravine about an hour from Höflinger's house. Pratteler wore " the long one's " trousers and coat. He had to turn back the sleeves in order to use his hands and the trouser-legs rested in many folds upon his open sandals. Under the blue shirt collar he had again his red tie, so people might see at once what he stood for. He pedaled with full force and frequently had to slacken his speed in order to have Höflinger, who did not seem to be in a hurry, catch up with him. Whenever he saw people on the road he tooted violently, while Höflinger tinkled his little bell. When workingmen greeted Höflinger, Pratteler responded with sombre mien, as if he were going to a battle. When they made a joke, his brow contracted in a frown. What was there to jest and laugh at, where they should rise in revolt against reaction? Everywhere he saw too much peaceful comfort. He was determined to infuse a new spirit into the life in this valley. After the last turn in the road the factory buildings came in sight. Pratteler saw a whole crowd of flues and chimneys in full activity. Behind the iron-works were the woods, almost entirely firs, with only a few beeches between. The water power of the brook which came tumbling out of the forest was used partly for the lighting plant, partly for the works themselves. When Höflinger and his new boarder and fellow-workman rode into the factory courts, they joined a host of other cyclists, and Pratteler's red

necktie stood out significantly. Somebody asked Höflinger whether he had caught Garibaldi, and all who heard the remark began to laugh, while Pratteler frowned in silence.

When the siren gave the signal to begin work, Höflinger saw that the newcomer made a good start; and the experience he had had with zealous beginners gave him reason to anticipate that the Swiss youth would become a good workman. So his relation to Pratteler assumed a pleasant form. Like a priest Höflinger served the wheezing and squealing idol which daily swung its high flaming face about itself. Pratteler only picked its teeth and wiped its mouth. His task was not without danger; of three machinists that did the work, one was sure sometime to be carried from his place with maimed limbs or dead. The idol had neither brain nor eyes, and he who served it had to be doubly on his guard. Loaded carts came rolling along tracks and stopped automatically. Pratteler manipulated the crane which seized the iron bars and laid them at the feet of the idol. Then a claw would project itself and draw the bar toward the revolving teeth. The bar cried out like a beast. Behind the disk a whirlpool of fire was set free. The idol screamed and screeched. At the end it whistled, and when it was done, it rang a bell. Then the fragments that had dropped behind were automatically removed and the claw reached out for its next work. Around the idol iron stairs led up and ended in a circular gallery.

When Pratteler stepped up to the monster he scanned it with a quick and hostile glance. For a moment he stopped short and felt disinclined to grapple with it. Then he approached with determination, gritting his teeth as if it were an enemy. After an hour he was familiar with all its secrets. He learned that it was a rather simple idol. Yet its gigantic proportions again and again impressed him, and he could not understand how Höflinger treated it so familiarly and had never mentioned it to him the day before. Nor had he said anything about the masses of workingmen who were here working for the profit of others

and among belt-gearings and cables and rows of steel beasts of all sizes and forms were day and night risking their lives. Those workingmen, too, moved about in a self-contained and indifferent manner. They crouched silently behind their machines, carried burdens, spat at intervals, and did not seem to mind that the foremen watched them and the engineers ordered them about. Pratteler hated all foremen, feared the machines with a dangerous destructive fear, and thought the engineers tyrants like Gessler, every man of them deserving to be the aim of a new Tell. They played at being masters, scorned the proletariat, and worked for the profit of the capitalists who paid them.

At noon other masses appeared in the factory courts: the wives and children of the laborers brought the lunch. They waited at the places assigned them until the siren blew. Then the workingmen rapidly left the shops and crowded toward their kin, unless they had brought their food in the well-known blue dinner-pails that were waiting for them on the stoves in the heating-rooms. Such herd-like movements annoyed Pratteler's individual and democratic sense and offended his good old journeyman traditions. Unwillingly he followed Höflinger into the third factory court where Spiele stood beside her wheel. Höflinger had invented a special arrangement for fastening the lunch-basket to the wheel. Thus he could enjoy a freshly cooked meal while the others had to be satisfied with the taste of warmed-up food, and he also had the satisfaction of spending a minimum of time and strength upon what was a necessity. Only in bad weather did the two ride home; but that made the long one lose his noon-hour nap which he never failed to take after lunch in one of the factory sheds.

Pratteler remained in the court, which he surveyed discontentedly, as the women and children slowly retired. Spiele, the tailor's daughter, suspected with her sensitive instinct that he was eager to express some opinion; so she busied herself with her wheel. When she thought it took him too long to say something, she turned around to bid

him good-by. Then he shrugged his shoulders and said he would not stay on this job. He had expected to find zealous proletaires who hated capital and fought for freedom, and he had found that everything was very well arranged and trained to carry out the designs of capital. Everything was after all a humbug. Whenever he was dissatisfied, he made a wry mouth, which amused Spiele. But she consoled him. What he had seen that morning was only workhours on a week-day. After all one had to live, and a small tree was better than none at all for purposes of shade. He should inform himself about the organization; workingmen were wont to awake at nights like bats. As far as she knew, plenty of mosquitoes were swarming about at times. Then she nodded pleasantly, mounted her wheel and rode off.

Victor looked after her in surprise. He noticed her low black shoe and the slender instep showing from beneath the skirt as she worked the pedal. She wore thin black stockings, which in some way suddenly impressed the Swiss youth. Her bare blond head shone brightly as it disappeared through the gate into the outer court. He remembered that she had no children; that, too, struck him and made him think. Why had she no children? So that was humbug, too, like everything else. All life was humbug. The long one was also a humbug. He owed his wife children, and he only nursed himself; even now he was lying asleep in the shed. Victor despised him; he did not deserve such a woman; she was far too good for this wretched toil. That she should come every day on her wheel to bring the lunch and stand at the door in the crowd was unendurable to him. Good heavens! There was nothing for it but to kill all that were responsible for this state of things, beginning from above with the thrones and the gilded armchairs, until the people should come into their own. But the wife of Höflinger had impressed him today. She seemed to make fun of this life; that made him think. He concluded that this childless wife deserved more intimate

study. Everything else could go to hell. When the siren called him back to the idol, he held his head more haughtily than ever before.

One day he remembered Spiele's hint to inquire about the organization. Höflinger, who had considered it premature to speak of it or take him there, glanced at him in surprise and silently turned back to the idol. But in the next working pause he told Pratteler that he could go with him to a meeting that night, if he cared. Victor went along. They entered a large hall, the walls of which were hung with all sorts of pictures, trophies and wreaths. It was the home of two singing societies, a brass band and a dramatic club, each having reserved one wall for its photographs and testimonials. Now workingmen were sitting around the same tables. Under the shining loving cups, wreaths, bows and flags their colorless gray or brown clothes reflected the want and stress of their existence like a spiritless sea. Victor's eye took in at once the contrast between the childish trash of the privileged class that covered the walls and the seriously contained, yet deeply gnawing consciousness of belonging to the disowned that slumbered in the men who now sat in the bourgeois atmosphere of the hall.

Höflinger took his place at the table of the executive committee. Pratteler was surprised to learn that the spirit of revolt had been haunting the iron-works for some months past. A big strike was being planned in order to rebel against decades of oppression and prepare the foundations for a better future. Pratteler was confused. He could not understand why he had not met this spirit in any of his noon hour ramblings. He could not conceive that everybody should then take a nap, return to his machine when the siren blew, draw himself in when the idol wheezed or one of its servants passed. An elderly workingman got up on a chair and reported how far preparations had gone and how large the strike fund had grown; he also mentioned what organizations had declared their solidarity and their readiness to give aid.

Victor was interested in everything that referred to the strike, but could not approve the circuitous preparations and all the secret machinations with which the attack upon the monster was planned, instead of seizing it simply by the horns, as he thought they had the power to do. When the old man stepped down and some others had spoken, he could hardly restrain himself. He felt too closely hedged in in this gingerly movement of the mass. He swallowed nervously and clutched and tugged at his collar; he gulped down one glass of beer after another to quiet himself. In his mind he saw a vision of violent revolt, the masses furiously attacking the idol with axes and clubs, and hacking it to pieces. The bourgeois state was just such an idol. Höflinger got up on a chair and asked all those who had not yet joined the organization, to sign their names. He reminded them of the powers that work up singly from the depths and are back of every uprising of mankind: discipline, devotion and perseverance. He informed the meeting that a food-centre had been established at which a striker's wife could for a minimum price get her supply of coal, bread and potatoes; out of this centre was to grow the workingmen's consumers' league. Finally he warned the men earnestly against damage to the company's property, smashing of windows and breaking of machines. Help should come in a positive and constructive manner, and the destructive tactics of passive resistance and of sabotage should be discarded as being unworthy of a German workingman. One should not forget that besides a strong body one had to transmit to one's children class honor and trade character.

These words from the lips of the childless man stung Victor into opposition. He gasped for air and struck the table with his fist. Then he hissed like a rocket; he, too, could talk as well as the long one. Before anybody had noticed him, he was standing on his chair, challenging attention by an imperious movement of his fist, and swallowed once more. "Attention, Garibaldi wants to speak!"

called a workingman that knew him. All looked astonished at the stranger. Many laughed at his agitation. His necktie glowed lurid like a midsummer eve bonfire against the pictures and trophies on the walls.

"Workingmen, proletaires!" he began. "I am of another opinion. Why? Because capitalists are vampires and scoundrels. Why should so many precautions be taken? Up and on, as the old Swiss used to do — that is what I say. If our fathers in Switzerland had waited until a consumers' league had been established and the men of Zurich or Basel sent money, all the cats would still be sitting on their tails and we should be paying our debts with Austrian coin. By God! They rose with clubs and ploughshares, and when the others sent a new army, they attacked it again and again, until there was none left. We must smash all the iron and other idols and serve their servant with the arrows of Tell. And when new ones are erected, we must hack those too to bits. The whole harvest must be ours. We don't want to spill our blood for the wives and the children of others. We must plague capitalism until it gets tired and surrenders. That is the meaning and purpose of capitalism: to capitulate. Everything else is good for people who have no children and no future to think of. They imagine one sort of class honor and another sort of trade character, which at the end amounts to as little as one had before. Class rule and trade fortune must come first; then character will follow. When Switzerland got to that point, Swiss character developed. But one must have courage, by Jove! Well, I have had my say!"

He nodded at the assembly with an important and excited air, hesitated a moment, and then got down from his chair. When he was no longer in sight, there was a moment of silence. Then a murmur of amusement and surprise arose and ended in good-natured laughter. But that, too, did not last long. The old workingman who had opened the meeting got up once more and all heads turned to him. So they passed over the rugged cliffs of Victor's address to the

order of the day and listened to the final words of the old leader.

Yet they had taken the measure of the long-necked Swiss fighter just as Spiele had done. By this début he became a well-known figure and his publicity began, without affecting or modifying his personality. The surname Garibaldi was soon generally accepted, but with its irony mingled something like an affectionate respect and beyond that something of that motherly expectation which is not spoken of: he was considered the promising child of the family. Victor on his part felt uneasy at this kindly and somewhat sarcastic indulgence which the submissive mass showed him from that day on. The laughter had struck him like a thunderbolt. Yet he felt vaguely that by participating in the movement he had linked his fate and established his kinship with that mass. Instead of celebrating the occasion by a feast, it began without further ceremony to correct and to train him, and this feature of their mutual relation was one he disliked. It should have been reversed: the mass should have been corrected and trained. It had no backbone and no faith in its own fist. It wanted to do everything by organization and pleading for help from Tom, Dick and Harry. It had no real men at the head. The committee was a calculating and deliberating bunch of old maids, and the organization was a girls' school led by their apron strings. He thought with indignation of those conditions, worked himself into a rage when he remembered that those immature fellows had laughed at him, and turned his attention to the tailor's daughter.

Höflinger did not allude with a single word to Victor's maiden speech. He did not even seem to have felt the pointed hint about childless people, or he bore him no grudge. That made Pratteler more angry with him. That long fellow had no temperament; that is why the couple had no children. Victor sulkily took up Spiele's sprinkler and deluged her lettuce plants until they were almost drowned. He scratched the weeds from the paths, raked

them up and grumpily fed them to the rabbit. He thought by himself that Höflinger could well afford to talk: he would not be thrown out of his home when he went on strike, because he was a house-owner. Then he spat furiously. After all the long one had worked hard and saved in order to get where he was. And if he had drawn his purse-strings tight, when the organization was in need, he would not have been held in such esteem. So much he had to admit: that Höflinger was devoted to the cause. But he had a good job; so what credit was there in it?

Victor cleaned Spiele's wheel. He took it apart, washed everything in kerosene, oiled all the parts and set it up again. There was a human being for whom it was worth while to do something. He proposed that she should have the handle-bar lowered; he himself almost touched the road with his nose when he was on his wheel, and brushed the branches with his back: that he considered the sporting way to ride. When she refused and laughed, he laughed with her, and their merriment and friendliness was doubled. But she ought to have an auto-horn, he said; that would make the children heed her more than the thin little bell. When she refused that, too, he suggested that she should discard the mud-brake to make the wheel run more lightly. He had removed his; and when he returned in rainy weather he bore on his back an armor of dirt thrown up by the machine. When all the spinach was eaten, he dug over the bed and wanted to help Spiele plant cabbage. But when he came home that evening, she had done it herself. He sulked, she laughed, and finally he joined in her laugh.

Spiele visibly brightened. She grew more lively and talkative. It struck him, how often and how heartily she laughed of late. Höflinger, too, noticed it and liked to hear it, without relaxing his stiff back and sharing in the merriment. His head was full of a hundred schemes and a thousand cares concerning the strike and the future of other people's children; in that unequal triangle he was the remotest angle. At least so it seemed in day-time and

while Victor was present. Pratteler would have liked to know how the couple looked at each other and what they talked about when they were alone; he could not imagine it. But he never noticed any disagreement or coolness. Spiele teased her husband with all sorts of pointed allusions, as behooved a tailor's daughter, to his difficult social responsibilities; but he never took it ill. Even when she trespassed beyond the permissible, he preserved his equanimity and only allowed an ironical smile to play about his lips. Then she would grow angry, call him wooden, and ask Victor to play cards with her. But the long diplomat held his own so cleverly that she could not keep away from him for any length of time. At the second or third game she would laugh, or in dealing throw eight cards at him, and he would placidly take them up, even if he had been reading a book. Victor never knew the moods of the pretty woman to produce even a shadow of annoyance or to spoil an evening.

On fine Sundays they went out on their wheels into the country. The two men had Spiele between them. In dodging Höflinger rode ahead and Pratteler remained behind. Sometimes they had to keep long in that order, because there were many pedestrians on the road. Then Höflinger's old and well-worn machine, which did not run freely, clattered ahead, and the little round bell strapped to the middle bar tinkled incessantly. On account of his long legs Höflinger sat rather high; it was quite a distance from his saddle to the button on his cap. Spiele sat two heads lower. Her legs were not long; she reached up only to her husband's shoulders. Victor was the last, bent double over his wheel as though he had cramps. From the front bar extended two bent cowhorns which he held at their very ends, so that he seemed to fly across the road with arms outstretched. But now and then his animated glance would take in Spiele's trim figure and sometimes he remained behind in order to take a good start and to rush on like an express train. He especially admired Spiele's

small feet which so strongly and cleverly worked the pedals and showed a commendable perseverance when it was needed. Otherwise she preferred a leisurely comfort in her movements. But when she rode along the street behind her long husband and before her gay little admirer, her head was humming with all sorts of notions and she made up her mind to torment Höflinger a bit in order to get him closer to her.

She began by suggesting that he should add a horn to his wheel, since the little cat-bell was insufficient for the road. She referred to Victor, commending the loud blast which made all children run to safety. She also called his attention to the safety of those behind him and showed her concern about her own; so he gave in and bought a little horn. Then she complained that his back shut out the view from her because he was perched so high and advised him to lower his handle-bar. He suggested riding behind, but that she would not permit: Victor would speed too much and with him she rode more safely. So Höflinger agreed to lower his handle-bar. But now she complained that she could not bear to see his bent back and peevishly asked him to raise it again. With such a longlegs one could do nothing; if he had a well-proportioned figure like Victor, it would be easier to get along with him. Pratteler had substituted sole-leather for the worn-out rubber on Höflinger's pedals, because it would last longer. Now it happened that he slipped on the hard and smooth surface. Then Spiele asked him to wear soft sandals like Victor, but he preferred his stiff boots. However, he procured hooks which kept the foot in place and allowed him to enjoy the advantage of the leather surface. Now she was worried lest the hooks should prove a dangerous obstacle in jumping off the wheel. She consulted Victor; but he only said, it depended.

One Sunday, however, on their way home, they met a drunken farm-hand, also on a wheel. Höflinger saw from a distance that the man took up the whole width of the

road and could not control his machine. He gave a warning blast of his horn. Spiele tinkled merrily. Victor also tooted a warning. All three kept to the right. For a moment it seemed as if an accident could be avoided. But suddenly, as though he had been struck a blow from the back, the brute swerved to the other side of the road. He could not help himself and had to ride straight into Höflinger's wheel: it was his fate. Höflinger wanted to jump quickly, but could not get out of the hooks as rapidly as he would, and lost control of his wheel before the other reached him. Spiele was frightened and rode between him and the rustic; her heart urged her to get near her husband. It was the worst move she could make; she prevented him from dodging in time. The impact was terrible. With bent head and shoulders drawn in, the farm-hand had shot at Höflinger's wheel as if lost in deep thought. The collision threw him over his own bar and the fore-wheel of Höflinger against the curb, where he lay like a sack. Höflinger bent aside toward Spiele's wheel. The woman, the man, their wheels and that of the farm-hand, the bar of which had caught in Höflinger's spokes, tumbled clattering and crashing into the ditch. Höflinger had stretched out his hand and balanced himself, breaking the force of the impact. Spiele was buried under her wheel, but her husband's weight did not fall on her.

There was a moment of suspense, until Pratteler appeared to render assistance. With chalky pallor he bent over the victims of the mishap and began to work like a fireman. First he grabbed the machine of the farm-hand, disentangled it and flung it furiously out upon the road with a clatter which its owner fortunately did not hear. Then he freed Höflinger from his own wheel, which was still between his knees, and helped him to his feet. Finally he reached Spiele; she was a bit pale, but unhurt. When he saw her on her feet once more, he began to upbraid Höflinger. He seemed beside himself and positively danger ous. He showed his teeth, looked Höflinger up and down

and rattled away about crazy hooks, danger to life, and stupidity. Höflinger looked at him in amazement and was getting ready to keep him at arm's length. Victor had been so much praised by the tailor's daughter that his conceit had grown; he was firmly convinced that he was the latest guest, not only in her house, but also in her heart. Undisciplined as his mentality was, he forgot all standards and limitations of the world and wanted only to blame Höflinger for the great fright they had experienced. At heart this beastliness was only a means of relaxing the surplus tension of his nature; but it showed nevertheless what savage beasts were haunting the queer faithful soul of the Swiss. At last a stray glance of his eyes caught the strange expression which Spiele's face had assumed at his attack, and he suddenly lapsed into silence, as if he had been hit on the mouth.

Spiele asked Höflinger with subdued voice whether he had been hurt and inquired about the wheels, and he bent over them. Spiele's wheel was undamaged. His own well-worn machine had more than stood the test; he had only to adjust the bar and they could go on; the bump which the frame had received was only a new mark of honor. Spiele thanked Victor for his assistance. Now she appeared again in such a halo of prudence and womanly kindness, that he would have liked to tear his heart in two and place one-half in her hands and throw the other at Höflinger's feet. At the sympathetic glance of her brown eyes tears came into his own. He turned about sharply and saw the farm-hand struggle up crab-fashion from the grass. He gave the wheel another kick and got on his Wanderer. The couple also mounted their wheels. For a time they rode straggling across the whole width of the road facing the setting sun. Then village strollers came with the evening coolness, and they resumed their customary order.

The incident did not act on Pratteler's passion either as brake or as sedative. In his queer head it tended to justify

his claims and hopes and to give him the right to support them. Something had appeared which had to be recognized and to run its course. Victor expected Höflinger to take cognizance of it; when nothing of the kind was forthcoming, he picked up that half of his heart which he had thrown at Höflinger's feet and with the other half placed it in the hands of Spiele. Now she owned his whole heart and openly too — by Jove! The long one knew it, and she knew it, and both knew that he knew it. That was a delightful chain of ready facts; and he saw the pretty tailor's daughter dreamily laughing and expectantly groping toward them with the free hand which did not bear his heart. One day she was bound to reach him; no power could help her. Then it would be for Höflinger to see how he would resign himself to his loss.

From that day Victor no longer restrained himself. Spiele, too, it seemed to him, was going more and more out of herself in her husband's presence. She seemed to enjoy their leavetaking. She began to sing all sorts of taunting little tunes that she remembered from her girlhood, innocent jolly songs with which the daughters of the middle class while away their time and keep awake their minds in their long wait for a husband. Sometimes she was simply ravishing. Once she danced before the men. They had read in the papers about Salome. She sat still a while and smiled, and Victor knew that she was scheming something. Finally she said: "We can dance too," and rose from her seat. She picked up her skirt with two fingers of each hand and began to take some steps. She swayed right and left. She bent back and forth. She laughed with her fresh lips. When she slightly contracted her lids and sent her glance like a song along the walls which seemed transformed, or when she fixed her gaze upon the light of the hanging lamp which made her eyes open like yellow daisies in a star-like halo, Victor said to himself that no man could tell whither she was looking. But he was sure that all this was done for him and in the name of the silent love they

bore each other. Nor did it strike him as strange that she never left her corner seat on those evenings when her husband attended the frequent meetings of the committee and left her alone with Victor. She then quietly busied herself with her sewing or mended stockings and seemed absorbed and absent-minded. Victor felt depressed and suspected that his presence disturbed and perhaps irritated her, but they would have to get used to it. When he could stand the strain no longer, he would drag forth his wheel, light the big lantern and ride out into the night. But his imagination would conjure up before his inner vision a glowing picture of what she was doing and how she spent the evening until night came. Sometimes he experienced a disappointment; for when he returned she was sitting at the table with Höflinger, perhaps laughing. That left a sting in his heart and would not let him sleep.

Of the strike he learned nothing more. He presumed that the big scheme was running its course, and his sharpened eye noticed in the noon hour the spirit that walked about among the steel monsters. But though he had joined the organization and had made the personal acquaintance of some unionists and social democrats the secret was so well kept by the executive committee that no knowledge which was not voluntarily communicated, reached the main body. Least known to him was the day and hour of the strike. The longer ignorance lasted, the higher rose expectation and the larger proportions did the act of deliverance assume which was dawning on the horizon of the near future. On the other hand, this uncertainty of the inevitable contributed toward increasing and deepening the feeling of solidarity. The herd strengthened the individual's heartbeat, and the individual unconsciously sought the pulse of the mass in order to raise its own rhythm. Even the most rebellious spirits suddenly experienced the change from individual to joint experience, and into the intercourse of the several members entered a note of respect and sympathy in face of the common foe and the common

risk. To those spirits belonged Pratteler. He still obstinately distrusted the leaders, and in his heart did not discard the motto: Everything is humbug. They made themselves so big with their "if" and "but," and they made you wait for them in order to appear necessary and powerful. But the individual man interested Victor keenly. Those days did far more toward developing his social soul than he himself suspected. His nose accustomed itself to the smell of the herd; to use a hunter's term, he had almost acquired the scent. He followed, though perhaps unwillingly, the physical atmosphere of this general body, in which he recognized his new master and lord. As its latest member he was still more by instinct than by reason plunged in primitive ideas of the possibilities of personal action and freedom of decision. His highly-colored speech had drawn a small crowd of super-revolutionists about him, childish, genuine groundlings, who wanted to be keener than the blade of which they were only the handle. Some ignorant old fellows also belonged to the clique and contributed no little to raise Victor's self-esteem. Once in a while the more experienced soldiers in the army indulgently looked over their shoulders, and Victor heard perhaps a kindly laugh; but that did not disturb him. The leaders had no time to bother about the tail; after all it is there only for the purpose of wagging.

In those days Spiele was again fighting her husband. She complained that he was not proposing to give her a discount at the future consumers' store and asked Victor whether he, too, would let her come off so badly in the big scheme. Then there was some talk about their leaving the cottage with the garden and moving into the workingmen's colony. He was ignorant of any reasons for the plan, but agreed with Spiele that their home was far more attractive and that anybody should be glad not to have to live in the colony. The matter was very simple. Being manager of the food centre, Höflinger wanted to live in the same building in which it was to be opened. Since he had

no family to look out for, he at least wished to devote himself thoroughly to the cause. But Spiele had not yet abandoned hope of that family, nor could Höflinger persuade her to his viewpoint. So the question was for a long time undecided, while the relation of the couple assumed a critical intensity, which they both felt as a sort of sweet bitterness, with the sweet or the bitter element alternately prevailing. Sometimes Spiele wept; then again she indulged in all sorts of tricks that she had learned from her father and his apprentices. She lost money and found it in Victor's pocket, which gave her an opportunity to appeal to his conscience. She could read fortunes in the cards and make spirits rap at her table. She promised Victor a good wife, and added cheerily: "One like me." She also promised him four healthy and handsome children, and at the prophesy lapsed at once into a melancholy mood.

Victor would have liked, with his glowing gaze, to hide her in a burning bush, so that nobody else could approach her. One evening he forgot himself in Höflinger's presence. Spiele had teased him about his red necktie, which began to look black with wear; she asked whether he would always stay a Garibaldi and offered to sew a new one for him, if he would let her remove the old. He agreed; nobody noticed the glow and the tension in his eyes. When she had unfastened the little red rag and was running away with it laughing, he quickly grabbed her hand and caught it between his crooked horse-teeth. Spiele cried out and tore herself away. Victor laughed with embarrassment and excitement. Höflinger looked up startled. The tailor's daughter seemed angry and scolded Victor; but her scolding was music to his ears. When he finally noticed the husband's cold and disapproving glare, he showed his teeth again and remarked aggressively: "People ought to be able to take a joke!" Then he struck the table with his fist and went out quickly.

After that incident Höflinger walked up and down in silence and listened to Spiele, who set about removing a

double veil from his eyes. She told him what a distant and strange husband he was, his head filled with the business of other people and his heart never heeding the need and the loneliness of his wife. Absorbed by other interests, he seemed to leave it to her whether she should continue to hope for the fulfillment of her longing, or like him, however young in years, passively give up all hope. She told him what wrong he was directly committing against himself and her, by renouncing what after all, as he well knew, the law of nature would not force her to forego for a long time to come. She left him no room for doubt, that she was going by all means within her power to avoid being cheated out of happiness by his attitude. A large, extensive organization was no compensation for the absence of a single innocent little being, which was perhaps denied them on account of his interest in the other. Not to lose a single trump, she pointed to the fiery young boarder as an example of a real lover. She took Höflinger by the nose and made him follow all the successive steps in the development of her heart's cause. She did not even fail to show him that a good willing boy was suffering for a wife's faithfulness toward her absent husband, who unsuspectingly and self-complacently was busy with alien things. She poured such a storm of good arguments and sound object-lessons upon the absorbed mind of her partner, that she really succeeded in arresting his attention.

Höflinger finally stopped and looked at her in astonishment. He had never noticed that his wife had grown from a little girl into a mature woman. It was the first time that he heard her talk like that, and her speech rang so true that one could not help agreeing with her in general. This was what that man of reality enjoyed most in all her argumentation. His eyes grew clearer and clearer before her. What her dances and her tricks had not accomplished, was achieved by this violent thunderstorm. When he had got over his first amazement, he began to rejoice in every fibre of his being; and his face showed a youthful and animated

glow which pleased her so much that she allowed the storm to pass by and to be followed by a partial rainbow. Finally her magnetism so overpowered him, that in spite of the jealousy which gnawed and stung, as she had desired it should, he began to laugh. His eyes were so kindly and so enterprising, that she joined in his laughter, and morning and night were turned into another wedding-day. Victor had been watching behind a tree to see whether Höflinger would abuse his wife for the incident of the necktie. He witnessed a scene which filled him with burning misery from head to foot. He saw Spiele wrestling with her husband, laughing and brushing her hair from her forehead and apparently running away from him. He firmly believed that she really feared him and suffered his amorous mood only because she could not help herself. At the end he heard Höflinger whistle a tune, while he was locking the door of the cottage and bolting the sitting-room, and saw him, candle in hand, follow his wife to her bedroom. Victor decided that this evening cried for revenge in his own and in Spiele's name.

One day a thunderbolt came down before his eyes. Höflinger took leave for three days and Victor was to remain alone with the idol and the wife. The long one had to take this trip in the interest of the workingmen's consumers' league which was now about to be realized. Pratteler spent half of each night on his wheel. He ate nothing and drank much. In those days he sought the midday rest with the other laborers and lay down where Höflinger was wont to take his nap. Having to pay so much more attention to the machine used up his nervous energy, already much tried, and wore him out. He wanted to sleep, but the wild and foolish notion that he might take the place of Höflinger at night, too, banished the rest he craved. Then he jumped up and went about in the courts and between the steel monsters, wherever the spirit of revolt was brooding and whispering into his ears wild and extravagant words. He breathed more freely when the siren called the

herd to work. His task of serving the idol filled him with a dull indifferent hatred; he despised the monster. Sometimes he gave vent to all the bitterness and the scorn his breast was harboring by spitting into the revolving shining face. But that had not the slightest effect. The idol continued to screech and wheeze, and its claw greedily grabbed the next iron bar. Then Victor turned away weary and sad at heart, and mounted the iron staircase to attend to the oiling.

At noon Spiele came as usual through the dark gate, jumped off her wheel in her light-footed way and approached his place with a nod. Recently she was inclined to be late and no longer waited in the crowd. The first day, eager to cut short the ceremony of taking the lunch-pail from her, he managed to bump his head against hers. She looked straight at him, surprised at his haste. He trembled like a wall hit by a shot, and did not know whether to fall backward, or forward into her arms. Both blushed. He exclaimed with embarrassment: "Hopla!" and set the pail down. She scolded him for neglecting his lunch, while his trembling fingers rolled a cigarette and he lapsed into a moody silence. The next day he let her do everything herself. He ate a little, while she explained to him that it was unhealthy for him to be so much on his wheel. Besides, he should raise his handle-bar, for it could not be good for a stomach to float like a cloud over the ground. It also shocked the nervous system too violently, when the arms alone bore the weight of the body, as was natural when the wheel leaped and bumped over the uneven roadbed. Submissively and somewhat cautiously he replied that she might be right. That evening he obediently drew up the handle-bar by the width of a hand, and lowered the saddle. It was hard for him; but since she was solicitous about his health, there was some consolation in it. He thought she would not care, if she did not love him a little.

When he returned late from a tavern, his passion got the better of him. He went to the door of the sitting-room

which led to the bedroom, and firmly pressed down the latch — not softly, but as if he had a right to enter. But the door was bolted. He rapped. Nothing moved; the door remained locked. With aching limbs he went up the stairs to his garret-room; he felt as if smoke were rising from his lungs and his very vitals were on fire. A tempest of thoughts was brewing in his head. In the morning he drank his coffee, pale and tortured. Spiele was invisible. It was not her habit to be present; she always retired once more after serving the men's breakfast and before Victor appeared. But that morning he considered it a special measure upon which she had decided — or a proof of guilt. He had all the day to decide which of the two it was. At noon he asked Spiele incidentally, whether Höflinger were sure to return that night and observed her from the corner of his eyes. She said "yes" in a rather absent-minded manner, which he at once interpreted as secret sharing of his impatience. Heaving a deep breath he opened all doors to the remotest back gate of his soul to give free entrance to any idea that would promise help. After work he was busy with the idol a few minutes longer, as though he had to put something in order. In reality he loosened some screws and unfastened a coupling. Then he threw himself once more upon his wheel. He did not return for supper. He sat in the inn down in the valley and only started for the house when he was sure that Höflinger had returned and the couple had retired.

The next morning at breakfast Höflinger scanned him with a searching glance. "Did everything go well with the saw?" he asked with concern. "Why should it not?" replied Victor sulkily and rose; the last mouthful stuck in his throat. When he rode to the works beside him, Höflinger noticed the change in his wheel and nodded approvingly: "You are right to obey my wife's suggestion, Pratteler," said he, and added: "You should also give up your extravagant speeding and pedaling for hours at a stretch." Victor was silent. Later other workingmen joined them

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From the Painting by Otto Modersohn

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and greeted Höflinger eagerly. But he was no more communicative than at other times.

They entered the machine-shop. Before the gable-wall in the background towered the idol. Its immense disk shone treacherously in the morning light. Victor's heart was beating. The siren howled. The belting-gear cracked and rolled up. The first shot rang out behind the halls. Höflinger pressed down the lever and let the idol run. It rang the bell and whistled; but there was a crunching noise. Höflinger listened and hastily threw back the lever; the disk made a sweeping movement. Silently he went up to the iron gallery. After a moment which seemed an hour to Victor, he came down again. His face was grave; his eyes sought Victor. "Did you do anything to the machine, Pratteler?" asked he with troubled mien. "Is something wrong?" replied Victor much too loud and angry at the ring of his voice. "It ran well until work was over last night. After that I was not near it." Höflinger cleared his throat. "Then it is sabotage," said he dejectedly. "But it is senseless and murderous sabotage. If I had not heard that something was wrong, we two should not be going about much longer." He went to the tool box and again ascended the gallery.

Victor did not dare to follow him until he called. They both repaired the damage done. Victor's hands were cold as ice in all the heat that rose from the half-glowing iron blocks. At this moment he felt a violent hatred of Höflinger and came near throwing him from the gallery. Höflinger said only that the perpetrator would be expelled from the organization as soon as discovered. That word sounded like a judgment to Victor's ears. It gripped and shocked him in a depth of consciousness he had not yet realized. He began to tremble. He stood unknowingly under the jurisdiction of the power called social morality, and his highflown democratic notions were already so strongly modified, that he came near confessing his guilt to Höflinger. Yet the impulse only intensified his hatred of

the man who by his laconic and deeply ordered life deprived him of one freedom after another, until it became an unendurable torture. He had lost his heart to Spiele's charm over which the enemy had unlimited mastery. Now his self-will, too, was being shattered and pushed under the feet of the marching multitude. Something had to happen to give the world breathing-space. A master shot should explode that whole damnable scheme in which his life was about to be sunk and buried.

A week after that incident in the short nine o'clock pause Höflinger remarked casually, that Spiele would no longer bring them their lunch, and they would have to ride home. He gave no reason for this decision, and, when Victor glanced at him, did not look as if he were inclined to be questioned. Victor said it was all right, and stared dismally before him. Suddenly he took his cup and angrily spilled the coffee on the floor. He was convinced that Höflinger had learned of the incidents of the first noon and the second night of his absence, and that the change was due to them. So he was again to be punished. Höflinger had raised his brows in surprise: "Why do you spill that coffee?" "Because I don't like it—d— it!" Victor got up breathing fast and stepped aside. Beside him glistened the cold disk of the saw; he looked wrathfully at the claw which had stopped about to grab a bar. What a tyrant the long one was! He found out everything; he got out everything from that helpless woman. He surely found it annoying to ride home every noon, but he wanted Victor to feel his power. He wanted to punish and torture him for his devotion to Spiele. And such a fellow was in the executive committee and was esteemed by the mass!

Suddenly Victor started, trembled and his eyes shudderingly turned away from the monster's claw. Whoever came within its grasp was lost, even if his name was Höflinger and he was in the committee. Then he would cease to tyrannize over his handsome wife and to lead

about by the nose, the ill-advised proletariat. A big humbug would end, and the air would be so much purer than before. Pratteler sighed, gritted his teeth and rapidly measured the idol with a look of distrust and hatred. After that, this beast should be disposed of — what a relief that would be! Two scoundrels silenced. A giddiness came over him. For an instant he had to hold on to the lever, but the next moment found him once more standing firm and tense in all his muscles on his well-trained cyclist's legs. The siren called. The bells rang sharply through the shops. Five minutes later another shot was heard behind the machine halls. Engineers went watching back and forth. The individual workingman disappeared behind the steel monsters; nothing was seen but the movement of shining metal limbs. There was a roar, and there a crash. Now an iron cry echoed through space. An uncanny shrill ringing of bells followed. The walls seemed to throw back a cruel hard laughter. The gearing cracked and rolled. The belts were swaying. Cold bluish lightning flashed all over the machines. The idol wheezed and squealed.

Sabotage had recently become more frequent. Several men had been caught, expelled from the organization and forced to leave the iron-works. If they refused, they were given up to the authorities. Höflinger was the most bitter foe of those malefactors. One day he again discovered that screws had been loosened and that some parts of the idol were even missing. In this way the black sheep among the workingmen were trying to take revenge. In the lower strata of the force there was a tendency toward disorganization. A group of secret anarchists and born marauders hoped to bring about general disorder during the strike and to have an occasion either to derive some personal profit or to destroy the whole plant. Though Victor did not belong to them and by his inborn middle-class honesty was separated from those wild rebels, still there was a bridge leading from the shores of youthful discontent and

ignorance to the camp of those law-breakers, and there was always intercourse through the medium of deserters and newsmongers. Victor realized the danger of sabotage, but he could not grow indignant about it, because he really wished injury to the capitalists.

Höflinger was of course not ignorant of his ideas. Victor had a bad conscience, though this time he was innocent. He suspected that Höflinger distrusted him and anticipated that he would make use of this opportunity to frame a case against him. He spent a half day full of hatred and torture in helping him to repair the damage, while the engineers walked about excitedly. That day there was not a moment when Victor did not wish the death of Höflinger and in his mind was menace to his life. Pain gnawed at his very vitals. He felt as if his lungs were compressed in iron hoops. From time to time his teeth chattered. Sometimes he had forcibly to collect his senses and was surprised that he was still there and alive. The whole shop moved about him like a wild and treacherous dream-world. Nothing was real in it but his boundless love and his unendurable hate. His bad conscience suggested ever new combinations and was eagerly active to realize the most improbable notions and fancies. If he had still believed in hell, he would have imagined in those moments of self-absorption that he was in the midst of it. So the time had come when the seed of despair which he had so sadly and seriously tended in his soul, was quickened.

On a Saturday evening, when he paid his board, Höflinger told him that they had decided not to keep boarders any longer. The announcement was made in a kindly and friendly manner; but Victor listened with secret malice. He grew pale and gave Höflinger a hostile stare. Höflinger added that he regretted, that he had liked him, but that everybody had to arrange his life according to his own needs. These were more good words than Victor had ever heard from him, and his suspicion that the recent sabotage and a secret decision of the committee which the long one

had carried through, were back of it, rapidly became a conviction. In his mind he sneered: "We'll see who leaves the house first." He nodded convulsively and left the room with stiff knees. He thought by himself: "He wants me to feel his power" and "He denounced me so as to get me away from his wife. He is a wretched scoundrel one must get rid of!" These three conclusions henceforth determined his thoughts and the direction of his speculations. Before his eyes the claw of the idol continually appeared, rising from the ground and grabbing its prey. Between the wife and the idol stood nothing but the doomed victim. Everything else had vanished like smaller beasts at the tiger's coming. The world had become strangely simplified.

Victor sat seriously brooding on the first step of the stairs to the gallery and stared before him with eyes, sunken and circled with dark rings. A workingman passed and remarked laughing: "Get your hair cut, Garibaldi." He looked after him wondering what he meant. Höflinger stepped near. The siren shrieked. The electrical bells yelled through the shops. Softly the gearing began to move. The steel beasts came to life again. The first thrill went through the halls. Hundreds of shining metal limbs were lifted high, slender, irresistible, triumphant. Elbows and fists appeared and disappeared. A low, mocking crackle, tinkle and knocking followed the first movements. A dull roar slowly swallowed it all. The belts were whizzing and swaying. Once more the machines were masters.

Höflinger looked surprised at Victor who was still sitting on the iron step, his fists on his knees. "Well, Pratteler, are you going to look on today?" he asked with a half-hearted smile. Victor started. With a bewildered look he braced up, threw back his shoulders and went to work. The strike committee had sent guards and watchmen to prevent sabotage and everything seemed to be quiet. Höflinger had just received their report and was pleased. "We have quietly put a stop to the tricks of those good-for-nothings,"

said he to Victor. "The machines run as smoothly as ever." The blood mounted to Victor's face. He had only heard the word "good-for-nothing" and mechanically interpreted its meaning; he was sadly experienced in that sort of thing. He felt sneered at and betrayed all around, and his temper rising, conjured the spirit of revenge. Again before his inner vision he saw the claw rise from the ground; he waited with bent head until it really appeared. Then with three hurried steps he approached Höflinger. Looking aside as if by accident, he pushed against the claw and the revolving disk, and waited, blind with excitement, to see what would happen. Six — eight — twelve heart-beats: finally, hearing no outcry, he looked around. One hand on the railing of the stairs, Höflinger stood, his eyes turned toward him and scanning him with a troubled look, as the other day on the street. "Something seems to be wrong behind there after all," cried Victor his voice pitched too high and shaking with fear. "They are standing about a machine and consulting." That was true. Höflinger looked in that direction. He resumed his reticent mien and bit his lip. Then he went up the iron stairs to the gallery and staid a long time.

With senseless regularity, without soul or breath, the iron sphinxes turned their hardened limbs. They stretched up their shining fists and chased the connecting-shafts until they whined and moaned. Cold and haughty glowed the metal. The belts were flying without purpose or restraint. Periodically an explosion was heard. The idol stood in the steady fire of the torrent of sparks that shot from between its teeth. The iron screamed. Pale and unreal the day looked in through the high windows. Where a sunbeam struck, it was felt as a burning torture. Through the middle aisle three older workingmen came down with measured steps. Behind every machine heads bobbed up to look after them. Then the engineers approached and the heads vanished. Victor tended the idol and waited for Höflinger.

When he came down the stairs, Pratteler counted his steps and listened to their sound. He thought he noticed that Höflinger was afraid. That filled him with radiant joy and with faith in his good conscience. The victim knew that it was doomed. Everything seemed to clear of itself. In the distance floated and beckoned the future of Spiele: that was the prize. His imagination painted glowing pictures of her life and of her heaven. His love became distorted like a cloud image and the adored form of his sweetheart went under in the wild conflagration. He hoped to see an angel rise from the flames; but at best it was a charred corpse that awaited him.

Like a monster horse the idol neighed. Its swinging disk rang and roared. Sparks flew about. That meant that the block was sawed through and the claw would soon appear — empty. Höflinger was just stepping to the floor. Pratteler hurried to him and grabbed his arm. "Come — look — quick —" cried he, hoarse with excitement, and tried to drag him along. Höflinger beat down his hand and stepped back. He looked at him more attentively. Victor threw himself upon him; carried away by his passion he began to pummel and shake and drag him about without any sense. Höflinger's fist came down on his head, but still without full intent. In Pratteler's soul all the long-suppressed rage and wretchedness flared up. Like a cat he leaped at the long one's neck, knocked him with his knees and twisted his feet about his legs to bring him down to the floor. He struck at his eyes and under his chin and tried to grab his throat. Höflinger was at a disadvantage, because he did not act in temper and his defense was limited to a few straight but honest blows. The claw withdrew empty and appeared once more. The disk rang the bell and roared. The carts approached with their load and returned with it. Victor no longer thought of his prize; he had only in mind Höflinger's destruction. All means for that purpose seemed justified to him. He did not even care, that he, too, would be ruined — if only

Höflinger were lying dead and in pieces behind the idol and the world were delivered from him and would be free to work out its own fate. When he saw that he was most likely to drag Höflinger with him to the claw, he directed all his efforts to accomplishing that purpose. Now Höflinger grasped the bitter seriousness of the situation, and his blows became heavier and more direct. But whenever he threw Victor with a single blow against the railing, the young man jumped upon him or against his legs, so desperately quick and brutal and clever in his movements, that Höflinger saw the moment come when he would have to fell him with a last well-aimed blow against the temples. He believed that the Swiss had become insane.

Nevertheless he had seemed to notice before that the song of the idol was growing weaker, and now he became fully conscious of it. Even Victor in his God-forsaken mood became aware of it. He struggled a while against this knowledge and continued to fight, but he was startled by it and his attacks seemed to be aimed distractedly. The disk whistled and started to ring the bells. As if struck in his heart, Victor's hands dropped from Höflinger, and he turned around at the idol. He looked about and about and was sobered. Behind the halls another explosion was heard. The gearings dragged and cracked. Then the machinery stopped. Victor collected his thoughts. It was far from closing-hour, only the middle of the afternoon. His eyes sought Höflinger as if to question him, but strayed aside bewildered and turned to the sunbeams and their glaring torture. The siren cried. It howled. It blew a triumphant blast. It played tricks like the sirens of a merry-go-round or shoot-the-chutes. Finally it stopped on one note which it repeated with full force, half a minute at the time, again and again and always at the same pitch. The disk shone and shook treacherously. Behind all the machines the forms of workingmen rose. Victor was amazed at the number of men that these halls had held. Again he looked at the long one, who contemplated him half

pitifully, half angrily. He braved that look for a second; then he cast his eyes down before the long feet of Höflinger and awaited his judgment. His heart was beating in brief, timid beats. He could have been directly led to his death without uttering a word or a plea.

Höflinger cleared his throat. "What is the matter with you, Pratteler? Is that the way a union member treats a comrade?" His voice trembled with suppressed emotion. Victor listened. His false repose was not equal to this note. At mention of the organization a multitude of possibilities overwhelmed him. He thought that Höflinger knew everything, and when he saw him retain his composure he dropped his last claim and looked up to this specimen of human greatness that had grown out of greater depths and had been formed by higher laws than he suspected.

Victor sighed deeply and raised his dim eyes to Höflinger. "Forgive me, I was crazy," said he shaking his head. "I understand nothing of all this. If you can prevent it, don't have me expelled from the organization. Do you hear? If you want, I will immediately take my leave."

Höflinger looked at him astonished. "Do you care at all for the union?" he asked. "I don't understand you. Why should you be expelled? Besides, even if I wanted it, I should not have the power to do it."

Victor's head dropped; suddenly he gave himself up. "It was I who damaged the machine the first time. But not after that. Now you will have to tell on me, Höflinger. Did you not know it? Why am I to leave your house?"

Höflinger opened his eyes wide, as if he could not take in enough knowledge of this peculiar fellow. "Because my wife is about to become a mother and wants to be alone with — it, and with me," he replied with tension. "Why did you ask?"

"Oh, I thought it was from revenge — or something." Victor passed his trembling hands over his brow and his hair. "It is all humbug," he added with bitterness.

Slowly Höflinger began to comprehend. "The individual is a humbug, Pratteler," he added with precision and knowingly nodded at him.

"And yet you want to be a father," remarked Victor. "Your child will be nothing better."

Höflinger grabbed his coat; he saw that all were getting ready and collecting in groups. "A man like me becomes not a father, but a brother, when his wife gives birth to children," he remarked as if to change the subject. "But why did you want to attack me? Did I offend you without knowing?"

Victor reddened violently and shook his head. "I can't tell you," he replied and grabbed his coat.

A workingman came running up the aisle. "Strike!" he called from far and swung his hat. "Strike, Höflinger!" The long one nodded; it did not seem to surprise him. For him particularly it meant that he would open the food centre and realize his ideal. Victor forgot his coat when he heard the word "strike." Cold and hot shivers ran over him. Now he stood there as a little modest workingman in the great event which the others had prepared. When his eyes took in the situation, he recognized the excellence of the organization and the value of the waiting period which had preceded this date. His coat in hand, he quietly walked behind the two workingmen and his head was humming with thoughts that were neither foolish nor jealous.

On both sides and all about the iron beasts were lying, lurking immovable, their merciless limbs lazily stretched. In their beautiful brutal bodies a sustained glow seemed to flicker. As at all times the vicious graceful forms lay there and shone with a lustful light. But no living brain conceived a creative thought, no eye was animated by a soul. Cold, heartless, brainless beasts filled the halls where they reigned. The little long-necked man with the bushy head and the yellow wheelman's sandals brought to contrast with them much solid worth, and surpassed them in real beauty. For those sovereigns could all be hacked to pieces,

and nothing was lost; they could be replaced. But if Victor Pratteler by some sad accident lost his life, the world would have been poorer in just so much love, good will, sincere remorse, faith, humility and honesty. Before he left the hall, he threw another glance at the idol, and wondered at himself. For the idol was no longer a symbol to him; he could contemplate it quietly and objectively. A feeling of shyness came over him at the memory of the last half hour; but the distress which he had experienced was so great and his deliverance so simple and comprehensible to his soul, that the power of the idol had melted before it. The siren continued to howl. The strikers had fastened the valve with a rope, locked the furnace room and thrown the keys in through the window, so they could not be reproached with having them. After an hour the fire department silenced its voice. In the meantime a stream of workingmen was surging toward the meeting-hall.

With the same quiet and impersonally gentle manner in which he had taken leave of the idol, Victor approached Spiele, when he returned with Höflinger. He noticed now with his unveiled eyes that the tailor's daughter was by no means as pretty as he had always believed. There were wrinkles about her nose from her habit of drawing it up so often. She also had some crowsfeet about the eyes. It could not be denied that these eyes were of a beautiful brown in the twilight, but when you looked at them in full light, there was plenty of green in them. Her hands were rather hardened by work and quite callous on the inside from wielding broom and garden tools. So Victor was consoled for her loss, and withdrew his head from the noose. In the evening the long one made a joke. "Think of it, Spiele, Pratteler did not want to leave us. I believe he had some scruples about leaving you alone with me."

Spiele turned over a baby garment which she was sewing. "Well, it is not always a pleasure to be alone with you!" she replied with a laugh. "But I am going to try it once more."

A week later Victor obeyed the order of the organization which bade all unmarried workingmen leave, in order to unburden the strikers' fund and to let the heads of families fight out their cause. Afterward they might return. He left the house of Höflinger, in which he had after all fulfilled a vital mission, grateful and with the best wishes for the happiness of those he left. With a conscious will and readiness for action, and with well-trimmed hair, he went out into a world which his eyes saw everywhere in the throes of reorganization.